

THREE INDIANA WOMEN'S CLUBS: A STUDY OF THEIR
PATTERNS OF ASSOCIATION, STUDY PRACTICES, AND CIVIC
IMPROVEMENT WORK, 1886-1910

Mary Elizabeth Owen

Submitted to the faculty of the University Graduate School
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree
Master of Arts
in the Department of History
Indiana University

May 2008

Accepted by the Faculty of Indiana University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Robert G. Barrows, PhD, Chair

Nancy Marie Robertson, PhD

Master's Thesis
Committee

Marianne S. Wokeck, PhD

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank the members of my committee for their efforts on behalf of this project: Dr. Robert G. Barrows, Dr. Nancy M. Robertson, and Dr. Marianne S. Wokeck. I would also like to thank the librarians and archivists at the Indiana State Library, Boone County Historical Society, Kosciusko County Historical Society, and Washington County Historical Society for their help in gaining access to club records and other primary sources.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 1: MEMBERSHIP PATTERNS	28
CHAPTER 2: ORGANIZATION	58
CHAPTER 3: STUDY ACTIVITY	83
CHAPTER 4: CIVIC IMPROVEMENT	110
CONCLUSION	139
APPENDIX	146
BIBLIOGRAPHY	166
CURRICULUM VITAE	

INTRODUCTION

Reactions to the activities of clubwomen in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era were both positive and negative. While some individuals understood the value of clubwomen's educational endeavors and civic activism, others criticized them for their lack of devotion to family, superficial study habits, and meddlesome concern with public affairs. Both images were immortalized in popular fiction like *The President of the Quex* (1906) and *The Confessions of a Clubwoman* (1904). To widow Nancy Phayre, heroine of *The President of the Quex*, involvement in club improvement activities provided her with a useful outlet for her talents. When explaining this attachment to club activity, Phayre exclaimed, "Why, this club means freedom and life and hope for me. I do not want to be a 'domestic woman' any longer. We women have changed our clothes, our houses, our food, and now we are changing our domesticity."¹ While this may have been the type of deviation from womanly duties that many critics feared, Phayre later explained that clubwomen cared every bit as much for the well being of their homes as other women.² The author of *The Confessions of a Clubwoman*, on the other hand, characterized club activity as a disease:

When a woman is once thoroughly inoculated with the bacilli of the club fever there is no help for her until the attack has run its course; no great scientist has yet been brave enough to apply a remedy sufficiently heroic to kill the germs.³

¹ Helen M. Winslow, *The President of the Quex: A Woman's Club Story* (Boston: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, 1906), 81.

² *Ibid.*, 305.

³ Agnes Surbridge, *The Confessions of a Clubwoman* (New York: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1904), 37.

Club activity became the downfall of protagonist Johnnie Henning who, after becoming infatuated with the activities of the Nota Bene Club, neglected her home life, prompting her husband to leave her. Henning eventually realized that she could not be a good wife and a good clubwoman at the same time, and resigned from the Nota Bene Club. While portraying clubwomen in opposite terms, both of these novels illustrate that these women held a visible social role in turn-of-the-century American society and warrant historical investigation.

Not simply the product of their day, or even their century, the clubwomen of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era traced their roots to much earlier women's organizations. The Parisian salons of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century France, for example, empowered noble women to directly participate in philosophical discussions. The Bluestocking Club in eighteenth-century London united intellectual British women in scholarly pursuits. In America, the creation of female-run organizations began in the colonial period. Colonial women helped the needy, supported reforms, and shared their ideas by organizing into groups. The earliest known club formed in Boston in 1635, and by the 1700s, women's relief societies and sewing circles had organized throughout the colonies.⁴

Like their earlier counterparts, nineteenth-century American women organized to help the elderly and the orphan, but also began to work for temperance and abolition. Whereas earlier women's groups drew their membership primarily from the eastern states, the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), organized in 1874, became

⁴ Bonnie Smith, *Changing Lives: Women in European History Since 1700* (Lexington, Massachusetts: D.C. Heath & Co., 1989), 79-80; Anne Firor Scott, *Natural Allies: Women's Associations in American History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 2. For an in-depth discussion of women's clubs prior to the Civil War, see chapter 1, "To Cast Our Mite on the Altar of Benevolence: Women Begin to Organize," 11-26.

one of the first major women's organizations to emerge in the Midwest. The WCTU held its first meeting in Ohio and drew a substantial membership among midwestern women. Women's organizations continued to grow and evolve over the next several decades. In the years between the Civil War and World War I, unprecedented numbers of women joined organizations. While charitable and reform activities remained highly popular, many middle-class women turned their attention to the study club.⁵

Whereas women's organizations before the Civil War had largely attracted elite women whose reform activities conformed to the female domestic sphere, study club activity after the war attracted a new generation of middle-class women. Advances in technology, including railroads, wider availability of books, and household improvements in laundry and food production, allowed club activity to become accessible to middle-class housewives. While most continued to conform to their predecessors' rhetoric of domestic ideology, the sheer numbers of clubs and clubwomen springing up across the country revolutionized American communities.⁶ Women's club historian Anne Gere has estimated that by 1900, about two million American women (out of a total 37.2 million women) had joined a women's club, and that their sphere of influence extended well beyond this number through their interaction with friends and family.⁷

In big cities and small towns alike, women's study clubs shaped American culture. Gere contends that "members of both local and national groups shared the conviction that they were participating in an unprecedented social phenomenon of

⁵ Theodora Penny Martin, *The Sound of Our Own Voices: Women's Study Clubs, 1860-1910* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987), 5-6; Scott, *Natural Allies*, 12-13; Marylynn Salmon, "The Limits of Independence, 1760-1800," in *No Small Courage: A History of Women in the United States*, ed. Nancy Cott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 129.

⁶ Scott, *Natural Allies*, 2; Anne Ruggles Gere, *Intimate Practices: Literacy and Cultural Work in U.S. Women's Clubs, 1880-1920* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 5, 138; Sarah M. Evans, *Born for Liberty: A History of Women in America* (New York: Free Press, 1989), 138.

⁷ Gere, *Intimate Practices*, 5.

national significance; that in joining with other ordinary women they accomplished something extraordinary."⁸ Women's study clubs increased the availability of cultural pursuits for generations of Americans by hosting community lectures, sponsoring art exhibits, and encouraging personal expression through writing poetry and essays. After the turn of the century, these same clubwomen funded the construction of many cultural institutions, including libraries and art museums.⁹

In Indiana, women's clubs flourished in both urban and rural communities. Indiana women's study clubs appear in documented sources as early as 1825, when Frances Wright organized the Female Social Society in New Harmony.¹⁰ Throughout the next several decades, additional study clubs slowly emerged and developed into a significant activity in the daily lives of Indiana women. By 1910, almost every county in Indiana had at least one women's club.¹¹

This study expands upon the work of historians in the field of women's club history. Jane Cunningham Croly, a leader of the women's club movement, wrote the first history of American women's clubs in 1898. Her book, *The History of the Woman's Club Movement in America*, provided an overview of the origins of association among women, an account of the formation of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, a discussion of foreign clubs, and a brief state-by-state history. Croly traced the beginnings of women's organizations to the first century A.D., when women began working together to open religious convents. These efforts, however, remained small in scale. Beginning in the

⁸ Ibid., 3.

⁹ Ibid., 251.

¹⁰ Blanche Foster Boruff, ed., *Women of Indiana* (Indianapolis: Matthew Farson, 1941), 1, 5.

¹¹ Some early examples include the Edgeworthalean Society in Bloomington (founded 1841), the Clonian Society in Vernon (founded 1858), the Minerva, also in New Harmony (founded 1859), the Woman's Club in Greencastle (founded 1874), and the Indianapolis Woman's Club (founded 1875). See Grace Gates Courtney, *History Indiana Federation of Clubs* (Fort Wayne, Indiana: Fort Wayne Printing Company, 1939), 1, 5, 9, 11, 27, 29.

early nineteenth century, religious societies of women grew and eventually transformed to encompass broader interests such as slavery, women's rights, and finally, literary activity and civic improvement.¹² Croly's book illustrates how turn-of-the-century clubwomen viewed their history and serves as a useful model of comparison to the reinterpretations of women's organizational history written by modern historians.

In the past twenty-five years, four scholars have emerged as leaders in writing the history of the women's club movement. These historians look at women's clubs from a national perspective, but each has a slightly different focus. Karen Blair's *The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914* considers the women's club as a feminist institution, while her later work, *The Torchbearers: Women and their Amateur Arts Associations in America, 1890-1930*, examines clubs as institutions that allowed women to engage in cultural pursuits like art, music, and literature. Theodora Penny Martin's *The Sound of Our Own Voices: Women's Study Clubs, 1860-1910* looks at women's clubs as educational institutions, designed to make up for the lack of formal learning opportunities open to them. Anne Firor Scott's *Natural Allies: Women's Associations in American History* looks at women's clubs as societies characterized by their service to others. Finally, Anne Ruggles Gere's *Intimate Practices: Literacy and Cultural Work in U.S. Women's Clubs, 1880-1920* finds that women's clubs refashioned the nation according to their ideals.

All four historians address key questions in the history of women's clubs. They seek to understand how these clubs grew into a widespread movement, and what effect their existence had upon members and their larger communities. Blair, Scott, Gere, and

¹² Jane Cunningham Croly, *The History of the Woman's Club Movement in America* (New York: H.G. Allen & Co., 1898), 2, 11.

Martin all attempt to explain why so many women's clubs organized during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Blair, in *The Clubwoman as Feminist*, finds that women chose to organize into self-improvement clubs, or study clubs, as a way to "evade society's restrictions."¹³ Club activity allowed women time away from their household duties and an opportunity to expand their roles in society. Jane Cunningham Croly, founder of the Sorosis women's club in New York, utilized the club as a way to fight against women's expulsion from the public sphere. In April 1868, after being denied entrance into a lecture by Charles Dickens on account of her sex, she founded Sorosis with other career-minded women. These women found that by working together, they could best fight against sexism in the workplace.¹⁴

Anne Scott agrees with Blair, also arguing that women utilized club activity as a method of expanding their sphere. Like Blair, she looks at two famous early women's clubs, Sorosis and the New England Woman's Club, when discussing this phenomenon. Scott finds that the New England Women's Club instituted many important services to promote a women's sphere that included work outside of the home. They began a School of Horticulture to widen women's career opportunities and also investigated conditions of female factory workers.¹⁵

Upon further investigation, Blair finds that women devoted to the study of art, music, and pageantry, had deeper reasons to form clubs. Again looking at the advent of industrialization, Blair asserts that the emerging middle class in industrial America, having gained great material wealth, sought to emulate the culture of European

¹³ Karen Blair, *The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., 1980), 3.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 20-1.

¹⁵ Scott, *Natural Allies*, 2, 114.

aristocracy. Men began to encourage their wives and daughters to become skilled amateurs in drawing and singing, and women in turn organized clubs as the most efficient means of gaining such skills. As a result, she finds that industrial America "planted the seeds of culture as woman's domain."¹⁶ For example, she finds that in the nineteenth century, women's etiquette books, like the one authored by Florence Hartley, encouraged women to study Italian, piano, and dance.¹⁷

The women studied by Theodora Martin also sought to expand their own knowledge. Martin researches all forms of study, from general education to the finer skills of music and art. She argues that study clubs became popular after the Civil War as a means through which middle-aged women were able to gain an education denied to them in their youth. She finds many statements of purpose and mottoes to this effect, including "Mutual improvement along literary lines," and "To promote the intellectual growth of its members."¹⁸

These historians find that women organized both because they desired an influence outside the home and because they aspired to improve themselves as scholars, artists, or musicians. The advent of clubs had a distinct impact on the lives of women who chose to join them. This impact was generally positive, as both Blair and Martin find that clubwomen successfully increased their sphere and became avid students.¹⁹ In praising their accomplishments, Blair notes

Literary clubwomen, like most American women, were isolated, schooled only for the service of others, powerless, and denigrated, even as they were revered. But as active agents, nineteenth-century women utilized the

¹⁶ Karen Blair, *The Torchbearers: Women and Their Amateur Arts Associations in America, 1890-1930* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 2, 3.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹⁸ Martin, *Sound of Our Own Voices*, 2, 38.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 2, 3; Blair, *Clubwoman as Feminist*, 4.

domestic and moral traits attributed to the ideal lady to increase autonomy, assert sorority, win education, and seize influence beyond the home in the forbidden public sphere.²⁰

Anne Gere finds a similar effect on clubwomen, arguing that women's clubs provided members with precious friendships. She finds that these women constantly expressed gratitude for the intimate friendships that developed, referring to fellow members as "dear, familiar new-old faces" and writing of the "deep love and affection" that they had for one another.²¹

Another important theme considered by historians concerns the commonalities between women's clubs. Karen Blair (*Clubwoman as Feminist*), in arguing that clubwomen were a more covert brand of feminists than suffragettes, finds that the vast majority of clubwomen believed in their special duties as caretakers of the home and mothers. They sought to bring additional responsibilities of the larger society into their sphere. She finds many women whose lives exemplified this notion of domestic feminism, most notably Jane Cunningham Croly. Croly balanced her career as a writer with devotion to her family. She tended to her home responsibilities every morning, and worked in the newspaper office of the *Rockford Daily Times* in the afternoons.²² The vast majority of women who attended club meetings did not desire a career like Croly's. Instead, Blair believes that their feminist tendencies are most evident in their desire for self-improvement. The very act of seeking to improve oneself, according to Blair, proves that members of women's study clubs operated as feminists. She characterizes common

²⁰ Blair, *Clubwoman as Feminist*, 4.

²¹ Gere, *Intimate Practices*, 45.

²² Blair, *Clubwoman as Feminist*, 1, 16.

club activities like public speaking as feminist because they gave women the skill to successfully articulate their positions on topics affecting women and their families.²³

Anne Scott, on the other hand, finds clubwomen's most important similarities to be practical. She finds that clubwomen throughout the country were united by their multiple goals, fundraising efforts, and careful spending. Furthermore, the founding of the General Federation of Women's Clubs in 1890 inaugurated a spirit of collaboration between clubs nationwide.²⁴ Gere finds many of these practical similarities as well. She notes that clubs tended to create a leadership structure, raised or collected funds, chose how to spend their money, and created their own study programs. She concludes that these similarities resulted from the practice of "systematized sharing," in which clubs methodically exchanged programs and other texts.²⁵

Historians of the women's club movement find that clubs' greatest legacy was their service to others. Blair, Scott, Martin, and Gere all consider the reasons for clubwomen's shift from self-improvement to civic improvement, and offer conclusions on the impact of these efforts. Blair (*Clubwoman as Feminist*) argues that women moved from self-improvement activity to service because they found a public voice and learned that they possessed the means through which they could influence society. She argues, "Culture study and growth of confidence became less relevant as clubwomen discovered, in bringing their beloved libraries and art programs to the public, that collectively they could bear considerable influence upon any issue they deemed important."²⁶ The establishment of libraries served as one of the first civic improvement projects

²³ Ibid., 58, 67.

²⁴ Scott, *Natural Allies*, 126, 179.

²⁵ Gere, *Intimate Practices*, 4, 102.

²⁶ Blair, *Clubwoman as Feminist*, 119.

undertaken by women's clubs. Perhaps of equal importance, Blair finds that the shift in activity from self-improvement to civic improvement occurred simultaneously with the emergence of a new type of clubwomen, a younger generation of women who had been educated in colleges or preparatory schools and did not need the self-help activities characteristic of the previous generation of clubwomen. These new clubwomen were eager to continue the institution of the woman's club, but not for the same purpose of education. The organization of state and national federations like the General Federation of Women's Clubs in 1890 further spurred reform efforts of all kinds because larger groups of participants expanded the types of work that could be undertaken.²⁷

In *Torchbearers*, Blair reasserts these conclusions, finding that clubwomen built many cultural institutions that became permanent community fixtures: "The women offered culture for all under the guise of maternal responsibility, and the outcome was an impressive array of permanent cultural programs and institutions."²⁸ Unlike the women discussed in *Clubwoman as Feminist*, however, Blair finds that the members of art and music clubs did not originally intend to extend their sphere beyond their intimate circles of membership, but felt compelled to do so when they saw how others might also benefit from cultural experiences.

In tracing the history of women's associations, Scott, on the other hand, discovers a history of service to others extending well before the origins of the self-improvement clubs of the late nineteenth century. She argues that in the decades between the ratification of the Constitution of the United States and the coming of the Civil War, women participated in many relief and reform organizations. She therefore characterizes

²⁷ Ibid., 93, 96, 98, 100, 102.

²⁸ Blair, *Torchbearers*, 4, 8.

study activity as a break from traditional service, and concludes that when clubwomen began to embrace community improvement work, they were returning to public activity rather than trailblazing involvement in this sphere.²⁹

Scott finds a couple of key events at the heart of the transformation back to community involvement. First, Jane Cunningham Croly, through her work in the General Federation of Women's Clubs, urged clubs to take on improvement projects. Second, female college graduates, either unable to find paid work in their profession or seeking to provide service outside of their occupation, formed a new base of clubwomen dedicated to reform. For example, Sarah Hackett Stevenson, a physician in Chicago, served as a leader in several women's clubs that had devoted their time to service. Scott finds that these clubwomen were most influential in their contributions to "the expansion of American democracy," the most obvious of these deeds being their endorsement of woman suffrage, which American women gained in 1920.³⁰

Martin traces the origins of civic improvement activity to the early twentieth century. In doing so, she argues that some clubs began to include civic activities in their programs because, by the turn of the century, they had succeeded in educating themselves and providing new opportunities for their daughters. They no longer needed to devote their full attention to literary pursuits. Unlike Blair and Scott, however, Martin does not find that study activity ceased, but rather that improvement activity was incorporated. She looks at the Decatur Woman's Club, which, after 1890, organized several civic

²⁹ Scott, *Natural Allies*, 2.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 2, 4, 126, 155, 165-6.

campaigns including the election of a woman to the board of education. At the same time, they continued their frequent study sessions.³¹

In discussing civic improvement work, Gere focuses on how clubwomen's reading and writing practices shaped the nation. She argues, "Through reading and writing, social practices embedded in the historical circumstances of turn-of-the-century America, clubwomen engaged with and helped transform perplexing issues of their time."³² Through these practices, they redefined concepts of the new woman, shaped perceptions of literacy, and helped create broader access to culture. As model new women, turn-of-the-century clubwomen disagreed with the slanderous characterizations of the new woman as improper and wicked. They sought to refine this image to associate the new woman with the accepted female role of motherhood. At the 1910 meeting of the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC), Mrs. Phillip Moore characterized the new, modern woman as someone who would instill the values of citizenship in her children. Similarly, clubwomen sought to spread culture to audiences by increasing access to drama, music, art, and literature. The GFWC, for example, circulated printed suggestions of literature appropriate for children.³³

Gere finds that clubwomen shaped concepts of literacy by encouraging Americans to view writing and gender as part of the attributes of a literate individual. The 1917 immigration bill neither defined writing as a necessary component of literacy nor defined reading as a necessity for females. Clubwomen sought a more inclusive definition, both in terms of content and gender. Gere writes, "Clubwomen resisted this gendered

³¹ Martin, *Sound of Our Own Voices*, 3, 4, 171-2, 176.

³² Gere, *Intimate Practices*, 5.

³³ *Ibid.*, 143, 145, 202-4.

construction of literacy as they encouraged literacy in club activities."³⁴ Gere finds that they critiqued each other's writing, printed programs, and formed study circles to combat popular notions of literacy that believed reading and writing were skills only needed by males.³⁵

Blair, Gere, Martin, and Scott characterized the women's club movement as an important development in the history of the nation responsible for elevating women's role in society, providing needed public services, and contributing to the debates over the future of the nation. Their studies do not, however, adequately discuss regional variations and differences between urban and rural clubs. Blair, Scott, and Gere disregard all of these variations. These scholars draw heavily on the records of national organizations, like the General Federation of Women's Clubs, which tended to be most influential in the East. They also throw in examples and anecdotes from lesser-known clubs throughout the country, but these appear to have been chosen at random rather than systematically. This choice results in studies that disregard the context from which clubs in different regions of the United States acted. Martin grounds her study in examples of midwestern clubs, but like the others, fails to provide an analysis of the region's unique attributes or to examine the regional context of women's club activity.

More recently, a few women's historians have taken on studies of class and race. In 1997 Priscilla Murolo published *The Common Ground of Womanhood*, a study of club activity among women of the working class. Floris Loretta Barnett Cash's 2001 book, *African American Women and Social Action* looks at club activity among African American women. Several book-length local and regional studies have also been written.

³⁴ Ibid., 34.

³⁵ Ibid., 23, 24, 33, 34.

These histories function as separate accounts of working-class and African American traditions in women's club activity, rather than systematic comparisons of these types of clubs to their white, middle-class counterparts.³⁶

In addition to these accounts of the women's club movement, a number of important local studies consider women's club activity within the context of the environment of a state, city, or town. Several are of particular relevance to this study due to their consideration of midwestern clubs or their use of themes similar to those discussed in this study. June Underwood argues that women's clubs in Kansas worked to create institutions that provided many important services, including the prevention of poverty and disease. She states, "women's clubs in frontier Kansas adapted themselves to the social environment and proceeded to reform it. They did so collectively, not individually, and in doing so formed the base for a humane society."³⁷ For example, the Friends in Council of Lawrence provided monetary donations to the needy beginning in 1875. Members of the Parsons City Federation volunteered their time to care for the sick and poor children of their community. Underwood finds Kansas women's groups to be in the forefront of reform movements among U.S. women's clubs. However, rather than being urban as prior histories suggest, the women who joined Kansas clubs were largely

³⁶ Priscilla Murolo, *The Common Ground of Womanhood: Class, Gender, and Working Girls' Clubs, 1884-1928* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997); Floris Loretta Barnett Cash, *African American Women and Social Action: The Clubwomen and Volunteerism From Jim Crow to the New Deal, 1896-1936* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001); Anne Meis Knupfer, *Toward a Tenderer Humanity and a Nobler Womanhood: African American Women's Clubs in Turn-of-the-Century Chicago* (New York: New York University Press, 1996); Wanda A. Hendricks, *Gender, Race, and Politics in the Midwest: Black Club Women in Illinois* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998); Joan Marie Johnson, *Southern Ladies, New Women: Race, Region, and Clubwomen in South Carolina, 1890-1930* (Gainesville: University Press Florida, 2004). In addition, a recent history of women's organizations in Akron, Ohio, discusses the work of women reformers who were affiliated with clubs. See Kathleen Endres, *Akron's Better Half: Women, Their Clubs, and the Humanization of the City, 1825-1925* (Akron, Ohio: University of Akron Press, 2006).

³⁷ June O. Underwood, "Civilizing Kansas: Women's Organizations, 1880-1920," *Kansas History* 7 (Winter 1984-5): 306.

rural, and primarily from the Midwest. Equally important to Underwood's study, she finds that women's club activity functioned as an important aspect of women's lives. Patterns of growth prove this phenomenon. New clubs organized rapidly after towns incorporated. In Wichita and Dodge City, clubs organized within a year of the cities' founding. Underwood attributes this occurrence to prior experience with clubs elsewhere, and an interest in club work on the part of new residents.³⁸

Frances Mitchell Ross's article about turn-of-the-century clubwomen in Arkansas examines the activity of the Arkansas State Federation of Clubs. She seeks to define the federation's role in carrying out statewide progressive reform, rather than explaining the group's national relevance or variation from clubs studied previously. Ross characterizes the federation as a prototype of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, extending the GFWC's initiatives to its own state.³⁹ Ross summarizes the activity of the Arkansas federation, and argues that members undertook reform activities to protect their homes and families. They were no different from their Victorian predecessors, except in method. Whereas Ross finds that Victorian women undertook reform on the local level, the federation united their activity with the national movement. These activities included prohibition, public health initiatives, and participation in the kindergarten movement. In 1913, for example, the federation succeeded in establishing the Arkansas State Board of Health. Ross therefore argues that on the state level, the Arkansas Federation brought the progressive spirit of reform to the state, and succeeded in achieving many pertinent improvements.⁴⁰

³⁸ Ibid., 292-4, 298.

³⁹ Frances Mitchell Ross, "The New Woman as Club Woman and Social Activist in Turn of the Century Arkansas," *Arkansas History Quarterly* 50 (Winter 1991): 321, 351.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 319, 321, 328, 335.

Like Ross' article about Arkansas clubwomen, Anne Bowers' article about clubwomen functions as a survey of club activity in northwest Ohio. She examines the literary, social, and civic improvement activity of individual clubs and local federations to conclude that women's clubs played prominent roles in members' lives and in their communities. She discusses the Port Clinton Literary and Social Club, which initially modeled itself after the lodge attended by the members' husbands. Later, the club expanded its mission from socializing to studying literature and current events.⁴¹ Bowers' article remains largely exploratory, as she does not analyze or critique the work undertaken by clubs, but merely presents their actions.

Nancy Forderhase traces the activity of the Louisville Woman's Club (Kentucky) as the group became increasingly active in public affairs. Louisville women began their efforts in the 1890s by advocating moral purity such as installing police matrons in jails and moved to advocate civic improvement in the 1900s. In the 1910s, the women began participating in municipal housekeeping activities, working to end child labor.⁴² Because the work of the Louisville Woman's Club was influential in so many areas of Louisville society, Forderhase argues, "Their broad spectrum of interests touched virtually all aspects of life in Louisville – from cultural to social and civic reform."⁴³ Women were able to participate because their status as prominent members of the city's upper class provided them with allies within the influential men's Commercial Club and other

⁴¹ Anne Bowers, "White-Gloved Feminists: An Analysis of Northwest Ohio Women's Clubs," *Hayes Historical Journal* 4 (Fall 1984): 42.

⁴² Nancy Forderhase, "'Limited Only by Earth and Sky': The Louisville Woman's Club and Progressive Reform, 1900-1910," in *Women Together: Organizational Life*, ed. Nancy Cott (Munich: K.G. Saur, 1994), 371, 373, 378.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 379.

charitable institutions. The group's support of efforts rooted in traditional female activism also played a role in their success.⁴⁴

Of the many books and articles that depict local or state club activity, only Stacey Horstmann Gatti's "Thinking Globally, Acting Locally: The Women of the Setauket Library Club, 1896-1924" examines the unique attributes of a rural women's study club. Gatti points out several key factors that distinguish rural clubs from the urban ones studied by other historians. The Setauket Library Club (Long Island, New York) organized in 1896, a year of transition for the town that she credits with fueling women's club activity in the rural community. The rural Northeast town was undergoing an economic transformation from an agrarian community to a mixed economy.⁴⁵ Gatti finds that while founding member Elizabeth Strong modeled the Setauket Library Club after city clubs she had previously visited, the resultant club had several distinct features. Foremost among these was its rejection of types of progressive era reforms characteristic among urban clubwomen. Gatti finds that the women of the Setauket Library Club read progressive publications that kept them in touch with improvement activities elsewhere, but they did not actively participate in any of the endeavors of the national federation. She also finds that they had a distinctly local agenda for the activities they did undertake, working only for the improvement of their own town. The new women's club also served as a vehicle of enlightenment into the outside world, as Gatti notes the club gave women the first opportunity to learn about the role of the "new woman," one less bound by domestic duties.⁴⁶ The studies focusing on citywide or statewide club activity offer

⁴⁴ Ibid., 380.

⁴⁵ Stacey Horstmann Gatti, "Thinking Globally, Acting Locally: The Women of the Setauket Library Club, 1896-1924," *Long Island Historical Journal* 17 no. 1 (2005): 19, 22.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 17-18, 35.

compelling reasons why women's club activity did matter on a local level. Their conclusions about how these clubs have impacted individual members and developments in individual locations illustrate the need to continue the study of local women's club activity.

Women have only recently become a topic of particular import to researchers in Indiana. Nancy Gabin's article, "Fallow Yet Fertile: The Field of Indiana Women's History" highlights this lack of attention given to Indiana women by historians. She notes that the majority of work remains biographical rather than systematic examinations of themes in women's history. Most important to this study is Gabin's observation, "scholars have neither placed women's involvement in the public sphere into a broader context nor evaluated the extent to which it changes what is known about politics or society in Indiana."⁴⁷ She further notes that organizational histories of Indiana women are largely relegated to club-sponsored documents that do not critically evaluate members' actions or place these actions into the appropriate historic context.

The only major study of Indiana women remains Blanche Foster Boruff's 1941 book, *Women of Indiana: A Work for Newspaper and Library Reference*. Gabin describes Boruff's book as "the most important comprehensive historical study of Indiana women."⁴⁸ *Women of Indiana* offers a collection of organizational histories of white women's groups in chronological order and biographical sketches of important Indiana women. Boruff considered her work to be a "resume" of Indiana women's activity.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Nancy Gabin, "Fallow Yet Fertile: The Field of Indiana Women's History," *Indiana Magazine of History* 96 (September 2000), 229.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 214.

⁴⁹ Boruff, *Women of Indiana*, 8.

A small collection of scholarly histories on Indiana women's organizations also exist, but all focus on clubs in Indianapolis. With the exception of two articles written by Earline Rae Ferguson, these were all written as Master's thesis and Ph.D. dissertation. Earline Rae Ferguson's thesis and two articles consider the achievements made by African American women's clubs in the care of the city's sick and poor.⁵⁰ Other Indianapolis studies include Alida Joyce Moonen, "The Missing Half: The Experience of Women in the Indianapolis Athenaeum Turneverein Women's Auxiliary," discussing the activities of the prominent German women's auxiliary and Erin K. Kelley, "'A Worthwhile Existence': The Conservatism and Consciousness of Indianapolis's Clubwomen, 1875-1920," discussing the ideology and activity of Indianapolis clubwomen.⁵¹

Because this study looks at towns in Indiana that border large rural populations, Barbara J. Steinson's 1994 review of the historiography of rural Indiana, "Rural Life in Indiana, 1800-1950," also provides relevant background. She finds little interest among historians in Indiana's rural history, noting that the main basis of historiography remains amateur county histories and genealogies, along with Eleanor Arnold's compilations of oral histories of rural Indiana women. Overall, Steinson notes that "it is curious that there has not been more historical scholarship on agriculture and rural life in Indiana because

⁵⁰ Earline Rae Ferguson, "The Woman's Improvement Club of Indianapolis: Black Women Pioneers in Tuberculosis Work, 1903-1938," *Indiana Magazine of History* 84 (September 1988), 237-61; Earline Rae Ferguson, "A Community Affair: African American Women's Club Work in Indianapolis, 1879-1917" (Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1997); Earline Rae Ferguson, "Sisterhood and Community: the Sisters of Charity and African American Women's Health Care in Indianapolis, 1876-1920," in Lucy Eldersveld Murphy and Wendy Hamand Venet, eds., *Midwestern Women: Work, Community, and Leadership at the Crossroads* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 158-177.

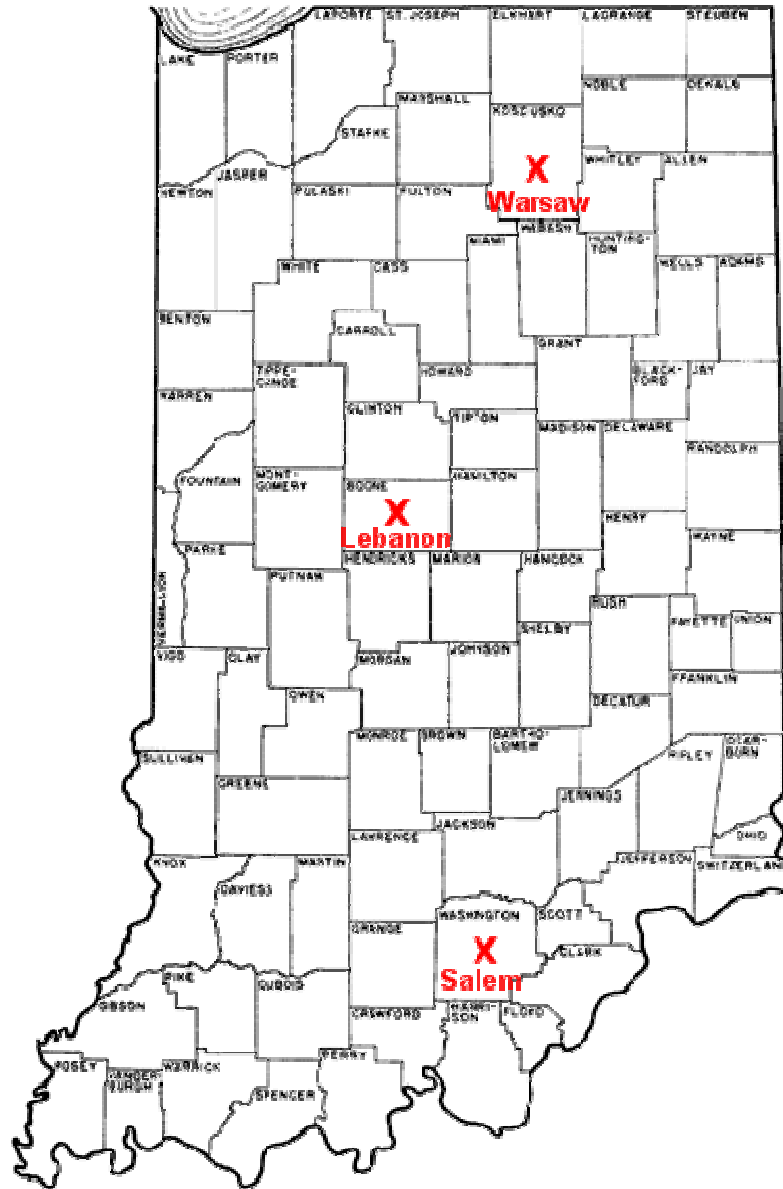
⁵¹ See Alida Joyce Moonen, "The Missing Half: The Experience of Women in the Indianapolis Athenaeum Turneverein Women's Auxiliary" (Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1993); Erin K. Kelley, "'A Worthwhile Existence': The Conservatism and Consciousness of Indianapolis's Clubwomen, 1875-1920" (M.A. thesis, Indiana University, 2003).

the state has been overwhelmingly rural for much of its history."⁵² Since she wrote, Paul Salstrom has published his account of rural life in Indiana, *From Pioneering to Persevering*, but little has been examined about women's experiences in rural environments, especially as they relate to organizations.⁵³

Because prior histories of Indiana women have tended to fall into the categories of biography and sponsored organizational histories, collective identities of women have received little serious attention. The women's clubs of Indiana's small towns, which were in part responsible for shaping culture in their communities, have received even less attention. These organizations are important to historical scholarship because the majority of counties in the state remained predominately rural by 1900, even though population figures showed that the state's urban population was growing. The three women's clubs under consideration sprang up in towns otherwise isolated by their rural surroundings and succeeded in bringing the culture of an established city to their developing towns. As a result, these clubs warrant further investigation. This study begins to answer the following questions: how did small-town women organize, what influenced this organization, and what did they do? While small-town women organized into many different types of clubs, this study focuses on women's study clubs. In order to provide an in-depth analysis, this study does not attempt to locate and analyze the records of the hundreds of clubs in the state, but instead begins the discussion of Indiana women's study club activity with a comparison of three geographically distinct clubs.

⁵² Barbara J. Steinson, "Rural Life in Indiana, 1800-1950," *Indiana Magazine of History* 90 (September 1994): 204.

⁵³ Paul Salstrom, *From Pioneering to Persevering: Family Farming in Indiana to 1880* (West Lafayette: Purdue University, 2007).



The Zerelda Reading Club (Warsaw, IN), the Ladies' Piano Club (Salem, IN), and the Florentine Club (Lebanon, IN) offer an excellent comparison because they were all located in similarly sized small towns, all of which functioned as county seats. All three clubs were extant around the turn of the twentieth century and left relatively complete records to document their activities. In examining the records of these three clubs, specific attention will be paid to the nature of their activity: was it predominately influenced by local concerns and interests, or more heavily influenced by national or

international affairs? Were activities sponsored by federations elsewhere, or did members choose activities based upon a more local need?⁵⁴

The women's clubs in Warsaw, Salem, and Lebanon offer a unique angle of comparison because of the similarity in their towns' population and composition. In the years between 1875 and 1900, the three towns exhibited many similar traits. Lebanon and Warsaw both incorporated as cities in 1875, but by 1900 each still had a population below 5,000 residents. Salem incorporated earlier (1868), but like Lebanon and Warsaw retained a modest population by 1900. In 1890, Lebanon's population reached 3,682, while Warsaw's population trailed closely at 3,574. Salem's population was just 1,975. By 1900, Lebanon had gained approximately 800 new residents, increasing its population to 4,465, whereas Warsaw's growth remained more modest, increasing only to 3,987. Salem saw a slight increase between 1890 and 1900, but its major growth occurred between 1900 and 1910, with the addition of approximately 288 residents. The Federal Government defines a community as "urban" once its population reaches 2,500, but a town with a population of 2,500 had little, if anything, in common with a city like Indianapolis, whose population in 1900 numbered 169,164. By this definition, both Lebanon and Warsaw were urban during the period under consideration, whereas Salem remained just on the verge of such status. Despite this difference in rank, the three communities exhibit remarkable similarities. Perhaps, then, the best measure of the level of urbanization of these three communities comes from Clifton Phillips's chart of the top

⁵⁴ Map adapted from Indiana Historical Bureau map of Indiana.

thirty-one cities in Indiana by population. Phillips only included cities with more than 10,000 residents in 1920. His chart did not include Warsaw, Salem, or Lebanon.⁵⁵

All three towns experienced the boom times characteristic of the entire state between 1880 and 1920. Sometimes referred to as "Indiana's Golden Age," these years were the heyday of literary and artistic activity at a time when the state was transforming from rural to urban. The 1870s and 1880s eventually came to be known as Indiana's "educational awakening," with many early literary clubs for men and women forming during these years.⁵⁶

In Warsaw, Salem, and Lebanon, the last decades of the nineteenth century resulted in a changed landscape. After the construction of Warsaw's new court house in 1884, a huge surge in buildings followed. In only a few years, new blocks of business establishments sprang up all around the court house square. In addition, the first electricity was installed in the homes and businesses of the most prominent residents in the 1880s. Despite all of these advances, in 1889 Warsaw's only library remained the one-room basement of Center Ward School. The superintendent of schools opened it once a week on Saturday afternoon.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Boone County Historical Society, *History of Boone County, Indiana* (Lebanon, Indiana: Boone County Historical Society, 1984), 57; Hon. L.M. Crist, *History of Boone County, Indiana: with Biographical Sketches of Representative Citizens and Genealogical Records of Old Families* (Indianapolis: A.W. Bowen, 1914), 399; Michelle J. Bormet, *A History of the City of Warsaw, Indiana* (Bourbon, IN: Harmony Marketing Group, 2001), 23; Warder W. Stevens, *Centennial History of Washington County, Indiana: Its People, Industries and Institutions with Biographical Sketches of Representative Citizens and Genealogical Records of Many of the Old Families* (Indianapolis: B.F. Bowen, 1916; reprint: Utica, Kentucky: McDowell Publication, 1987); State of Indiana, "Stats Indiana," <http://www.stats.indiana.edu>, accessed 2/12/2007; United States Census Bureau, http://www2.census.gov/prod2/decennialdocuments/1890_a_vi_08.pdf, accessed 2/12/2007; Clifton J. Phillips, *Indiana in Transition: The Emergence of an Industrial Commonwealth, 1880-1920* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1968), 366-7.

⁵⁶ Phillips, *Indiana in Transition*, 504-5, 552.

⁵⁷ Bormet, *History of the City of Warsaw, Indiana*, 23, 24, 25.

The landscape of Salem was markedly similar to Warsaw in the 1880s. Several prominent residents platted additional business lots in 1883, and by 1886 construction on a new, modern court house began. A number of companies opened in the next decade, including two furniture factories, a spoke and bending company, and an ice plant. In 1903, a canning factory opened. Perhaps spurred by the growth of the local economy, several congregations capitalized on the town's prosperity, constructing new church buildings. In 1899, the Methodist Church dedicated its new building, followed by the Christian Church in 1900.⁵⁸

Lebanon experienced a similar surge in construction, beginning in the 1890s. Unlike Warsaw, businesses emerged before the construction of the new court house, rather than as a result of its construction. One of these early projects, begun in August 1902, included the construction of a public library. Despite all this growth, Lebanon did not dedicate its new court house until July 4, 1912.⁵⁹ In 1914, L.M. Crist recalled

It is not one of the big towns of this day, but it is solid and brim full of energy and push...[with] beautiful homes, graceful, commodious churches, the substantial public buildings after the latest improved designs, the magnificent school buildings with all modern fittings, the splendid business houses for manufacturing and facilitating trade, and above all the peaceful home-like spirit that prevails, making this a very paradise of beauty, health, and quiet.⁶⁰

Just as Gatti noted in her study of the rural Setauket Library Club, the emergence of literary clubs in Warsaw, Salem, and Lebanon would occur simultaneously with the beginnings of urbanization in each community.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Stevens, *Centennial History of Washington County, Indiana*, 106, 551, 608, 613.

⁵⁹ Crist, *History of Boone County, Indiana*, 431; Boone County Historical Society, *History of Boone County, Indiana*, 62.

⁶⁰ Crist, *History of Boone County, Indiana*, 399.

⁶¹ Gatti, "Thinking Globally, Acting Globally," 19.

Whereas in 1886 when the Zerelda Reading Club organized its first meeting, it was only the second women's study club in the town (the Warsaw Reading Club held its first meeting in 1880), by the 1890s club fever spread much faster in Lebanon. The first known club in Lebanon, the Tourist Club, organized in 1895. By 1900, only five years later, fourteen clubs had organized.⁶² The Ladies' Piano Club of Salem was also the second club to organize when it held its first meeting in 1896. The Woman's Club of Salem held its first meeting in 1891. Later, after the turn of the century, several other women's clubs organized.⁶³

Warsaw, Salem, and Lebanon occupied a place somewhere between the landscape of the rural farm and that of the industrial city. Technically defined as a city and yet in practice, sharing few characteristics with places like Indianapolis, Chicago, Cleveland, or Cincinnati, these three county seats vied for the elusive respect and prosperity that incorporation might offer. For the purposes of this study, all three are referred to as towns, reflecting more accurately their actual circumstances in the hierarchy of American cities.

What did the townspeople of Warsaw, Salem, and Lebanon consider themselves to be, and what does their own understanding of their collective identity reveal about the clubwomen who emerged from these circumstances? The accounts of incorporation in county histories reveal that townspeople were proud of their official status as Indiana cities. A reflection of their hard work at growing a population, status as a city distanced residents from the memories of a more rural existence. Constant reminders of an agrarian past must have been a daily occurrence, however, as all three towns serviced otherwise

⁶² "A Federation of Clubs," *Lebanon Pioneer*, 1 June 1899; Martha Nicholson McKay, *Literary Clubs of Indiana* (Indianapolis: Bowen-Merrill Company, 1894), 58.

⁶³ Stevens, *Centennial History of Washington County*, 375.

rural, agrarian counties. In fact, a number of clubwomen in all three communities had recent ties to farm life. At least six Florentine Club members grew up on farms.

Numbers of Zerelda and Ladies' Piano Club members with close ties to farms are harder to calculate, as fathers' occupations are mostly undetermined. However, at least four Zerelda members and one Ladies' Piano Club member grew up on a farm. Was moving to town a conscious choice, or an economic necessity? Either way, it redefined lives dramatically, aligning former farmers more closely with the bustle, excitement, and leisure associated with an urban existence. They were refashioning their lives and recreating themselves as part of a more genteel, refined middle class.

Moving to town certainly had its advantages for women. Foremost it changed their daily routine. On a farm, a woman was fairly isolated, often separated for miles from the nearest neighbor. While the husband worked in the fields all day long, the woman's sole companions were any children not working with their father in the fields, and possibly a servant. Household chores may have remained similar to those of women in town, but farm women tended to have more mouths to feed, and balanced their indoor chores with tasks like milking cows, collecting eggs, and butchering chickens.⁶⁴ In town, women tended to have more access to time-saving household technologies, and purchased farm products from stores. Clubs became a popular outlet for spare time, inspired by a desire to emulate big cities or spread culture to their town. Clubs in small towns established women in a network of larger urban cities, and served as a mark of status and upward mobility. It was an important endeavor for any small town woman interested in reinventing herself and her town with an air of culture and prosperity.

⁶⁴ Salstrom, *From Pioneering to Persevering*, 63-66.

Women's study clubs in Indiana's small towns played important roles in creating community culture. These clubs not only cultivated self-improvement through education, but they also provided members with friendship and support in an environment that oftentimes proved complacent to women's attempts to exercise their influence outside of the home. This study is divided into four chapters. First, an examination of membership characteristics considers the relationships present among early members and the average profile of club members. The second chapter discusses each club's formation and examines possible sources of inspiration and influence. The third chapter discusses each group's study habits and the nature of topics studied (i.e., topics of national, statewide, or local interest). The final chapter examines each club's civic improvement activities.

CHAPTER 1: MEMBERSHIP PATTERNS

In order to understand outside precedents that may have influenced membership in Indiana clubs, a brief summary of the patterns of association dominating the national club movement is necessary. Study clubs were popular outlets for women in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Conforming to societal ideals of separate spheres, women organized in gendered clubs as a way to escape male scrutiny and create their own place within the larger community. Caught between the Victorian notion that the biological combination of a woman's innate purity and mental limitations suited her only for motherhood, and her own desire for culture and education, the all-female study club offered a woman an opportunity for education that, by restricting her activity to private, female-only gatherings, did not challenge traditional Victorian values.⁶⁵

Past histories of the club movement have characterized the average late nineteenth-century clubwoman as white, middle-class, and urban. Her age ranged between forty and fifty, and she was married with grown children. She may have had some education as a young woman, and, if married, would not have worked outside the home. While some variations to this generalization are acknowledged by prior histories, Karen Blair argues that young mothers would rarely have joined women's clubs until after World War I. She asserts that these mothers only emerged from their homes by

⁶⁵ Anne Ruggles Gere, *Intimate Practices: Literacy and Cultural Work in U.S. Women's Clubs, 1880-1920* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 139; Theodora Penny Martin, *The Sound of Our Own Voices: Women's Study Clubs, 1860-1910* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987), 29-30.

necessity to contribute to the war effort, and as a result were drawn into club work for the first time.⁶⁶

Especially in their early years, clubs tended to recruit members with similar backgrounds. They also invited new members with whom they were already associated. Since charter members tended to be middle-aged and married, Blair contends that "although many single career women participated, especially teachers, the societies tended to be dominated by women who had enjoyed some education in youth but who had married, run households, and raised children, with little time, space, money, or permission to pursue the arts." Single women who participated in club activities were more likely to form their own clubs than to join a club dominated by married women. It was not until clubs had become established community institutions that their memberships began to include a wider mix in age and marital status. These clubs would have remained white and middle-class; other races and classes formed their own clubs. Additionally, while the women who belonged to the charitable and reform societies of the early nineteenth century tended to associate based on religious affiliations, charter members of study clubs, while sharing a Christian faith, did not necessarily belong to the same church.⁶⁷

Prior literature has suggested that club members would remain loyal to their study club until circumstances or death prevented their continued participation. Karen Blair,

⁶⁶ Frances Mitchell Ross, "The New Woman as Club Woman and Social Activist in Turn of the Century Arkansas," *Arkansas History Quarterly* 50 (Winter 1991): 319; Karen J. Blair, *The Torchbearers: Women and their Amateur Arts Associations in America, 1890-1930* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994): 4, 28, 41; Martin, *Sound of Our Own Voices*, 70, 72; Karen J. Blair, *The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., 1980), 57, 60.

⁶⁷ Martin, *Sound of Our Own Voices*, 127; Blair, *Torchbearers*, 4; Gere, *Intimate Practices*, 4-6, 40-44; Blair, *Clubwoman as Feminist*, 61, 63.

for example, argues that most clubwomen were "intensely loyal" to their club, and remained active for many years.⁶⁸

Historians tend to be less clear when defining the phenomenon of mother-daughter relationships in clubs. Established histories reach no clear consensus as to how common it would have been for mothers and daughters to join the same club. These affiliations seem unlikely because they do not fit historians' arguments that middle-aged clubwomen would have associated with women of their own ages. Anne Gere, however, after describing the typical clubwoman, acknowledges that it would not have been uncommon for mothers and daughters to join the same clubs. Theodora Penny Martin chooses not to take a clear position, first arguing that daughters would not join their mothers' clubs, and later opening the door to the possibility that mother-daughter memberships existed.⁶⁹ This difference in opinion illustrates the necessity of continuing to study and characterize the relationships present among club members in a more diverse variety of communities.

In fact, the exact characteristics of club composition were a direct result of location and individual circumstance and local preference, rather than a conscious desire among women all over the country to limit club memberships to one female prototype. This assertion is best illustrated through the examples of the two most famous early women's clubs in the country, the New England Women's Club and Sorosis.

When the New England Women's Club held its first meeting in Boston in February 1868, founder Caroline Severance invited her friends and personal contacts to join her endeavor. The wife of a banker, mother of five, and active reformer, Severance

⁶⁸ Blair, *Clubwoman as Feminist*, 63.

⁶⁹ Martin, *The Sound of Our Own Voices*, 58, 73, 81; Gere, *Intimate Practices*, 47.

attracted other reformers, including Julia Ward Howe, to her organization. Sorosis, on the other hand, founded in New York City in April 1868 by Jane Cunningham Croly, primarily consisted of career women. Croly, a journalist, invited many of her writer friends but also attracted women from other professions. Thus, in both instances, women with similar backgrounds sought to affiliate with each other.⁷⁰

Unlike the urban women of Sorosis and the New England Women's Club, the membership of the rural Setauket Library Club in Long Island, studied by Stacy Horstmann Gatti, originated as a multigenerational organization. Younger members invited both their friends and their mothers to join the club. Whereas Blair and Martin noted the possibility that mothers' participation in clubs resulted in their daughters' decisions to begin club work, Gatti instead found that the daughters in Setauket encouraged their mothers to join the first women's study club in town. Gatti concludes that the multigenerational phenomenon was most likely a result of the realities of life in a rural Northeast community.⁷¹ An analysis of the Zerelda Reading Club, the Ladies' Piano Club, and the Florentine Club proves that membership characteristics and patterns of association in small Indiana communities were, as with the Setauket Library Club, anything but simple.

Who was the Indiana clubwoman and under what circumstances did she choose to associate? Understanding the profile of a woman most likely to join a club in Indiana is central to examining her motives. A comparison of the similarities and differences between the memberships of the Zerelda Reading Club, the Ladies' Piano Club, and the Florentine Club will demonstrate how community connections and member affiliations

⁷⁰ Blair, *Clubwoman as Feminist*, 15-16, 21, 31-32, 57.

⁷¹ Stacey Horstmann Gatti, "Thinking Globally, Acting Locally: The Women of the Setauket Library Club, 1896-1924," *Long Island Historical Journal* 17 no. 1 (2005): 16, 22.

led each club on its own unique path to formation. Analyzing the membership of three geographically distinct Indiana study clubs will also begin to shed light on the identity of the Indiana clubwoman. This chapter will consider club membership in three distinct sections: first, an analysis of the relationships present among charter members; second, a comparison of the characteristics shared by charter members; and finally, a comparison of new membership.

Relationships Among Charter Members

The charter members of the Zerelda Reading Club, the Ladies' Piano Club, and the Florentine Club were not the first women in their communities to recognize the benefits of association. In all three instances, at least one study club had formed in their city within the previous decade. Whereas in Warsaw and Salem, club activity still remained outside the sphere of life for most of the women in each city, with only one prior club having formed, in Lebanon, numerous clubs could be found by 1900. Even so, a woman considering the possibility of beginning a new club would not know what to expect from her endeavor, and would therefore thoughtfully choose the women with whom she would associate in an attempt to assure a larger chance of success. One might ask, then, what kind of a woman founded a study club in an average Indiana town, and with whom did she choose to associate? An analysis of the prior affiliations among the three clubs under consideration will begin to answer these questions.

The Zerelda Reading Club

On 17 February 1886, eight women held the charter meeting of the Zerelda Reading Club: Emma Haymond, Victoria Beck Moon, Sarah Thayer, Mattie Thayer,

Jennie Ripple, Mary Binns, Barbara Brown, and Sarah Graves.⁷² Available records do not indicate precisely who initiated the gathering, but possibly it was the idea of the club's first president, Emma Haymond. Haymond was a well-connected woman. Her husband, Edgar, served as Warsaw's city attorney and would soon become a judge. He was also the director of the State Bank of Warsaw. Emma was forty-two years old, and had four children between the ages of ten and twenty-one.⁷³

Meeting with Emma on February 17 were an array of the wives of the town's most prominent businessmen. In all, half of the eight members had a family connection to another charter member. Sarah Thayer and Mattie Thayer were mother and daughter, while Mary Binns and Victoria Moon were sisters. Beyond this, most additional relationships are speculation, but connections likely resulted from husbands' occupations. As a grain dealer, Sarah Thayer's husband John may have transacted business with farmers Lewis Ripple (Jennie) and John Brown (Barbara), or grocer Edward Moon (Victoria). Both Sarah Graves' deceased husband William, a banker, and her future husband George Chapman, a real estate businessman, may have transacted business with any of these men. Finally, several of the husbands were involved in local politics. Jennie Ripple's husband would soon be elected sheriff, while Edgar Haymond (Emma) served as city attorney and judge and Edward Moon (Victoria) was a former county treasurer. While any of these business relationships may have provided the wives ample

⁷² 1886 Zerelda Reading Club Membership List, printed in Zerelda Reading Club Constitution Book, Zerelda Reading Club Records, Old Jail Museum, Kosciusko County Historical Society, Warsaw, Indiana.

⁷³ Manuscript Census, Town of Warsaw, Kosciusko County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population, 1880, in National Archives Microfilm Publication T9, Roll 290, Enumeration District 62, Page 15, hereafter referred to as 1880 Census, Kosciusko County, ED 62, Page 15; Manuscript Census, Wayne Township, Kosciusko County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population, 1900, in National Archives Microfilm Publication T623, Roll 382, Enumeration District 65, Page 7, hereafter referred to as 1900 Census, Kosciusko County, ED 65, Page 7.

opportunities to associate, it is significant to note that by virtue of these men's status in their small community alone, charter members had most likely socialized at their husbands' fraternal organizations, attended the same parties, and participated in town celebrations.⁷⁴

Perhaps as a result of these prior associations, records indicate that the charter members of the Zerelda Reading Club highly valued friendships with their associates. Of the eight women, most remained members of the club until their deaths. Jennie Ripple died in 1900, Sarah Thayer died in 1914, and Victoria Beck Moon died in 1928. Emma Haymond and Mary Binns' death dates could not be confirmed, but their ages at the time their names were dropped from membership lists suggest that they may have remained club members until their deaths. Mattie Hendee resigned in 1888 when her first child was born, but later returned to the club and remained a member until the age of ninety-one. Barbara Brown's and Sarah Chapman's reasons for resignation are unknown.⁷⁵

Because members of the Zerelda Reading Club were such close friends, they often made special arrangements to recall their associates when they died. In April 1900, when Jennie Ripple died, the club made special arrangements to attend her funeral. Minutes note, "several ladies offered their private carriages for the use of the members who could accompany the remains of Mrs. Ripple, a charter member and one of the early Presidents of the club, to her last resting place."⁷⁶ As the years passed, the Zerelda Reading Club did not forget its deceased members. Once a year, the club held a

⁷⁴ See Appendix.

⁷⁵ See Appendix; Zerelda Reading Club Membership List.

⁷⁶ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 30 April 1900, Zerelda Reading Club Records.

memorial day, at which time everyone assembled at the cemetery and placed flowers at their graves.⁷⁷

The Ladies' Piano Club

Unlike the women of the Florentine and Zerelda Reading clubs, the main factor bringing together the charter members of the Ladies' Piano Club was musical ability. The Ladies' Piano Club organized to study composers and their musical works, but also to perfect members' piano playing expertise. Most of the women who attended the organizational meeting were already skilled piano players.⁷⁸ Skill, or at least aptitude for piano playing, was a necessary qualification for membership.

Mattie Tucker Morris organized the Ladies' Piano Club in 1896. Morris was the daughter of Benjamin Tucker, a resident of Salem who died in 1885. Morris had three siblings. In 1896, she was a single music teacher. She would prove to be devoted to the club, remaining a member well past 1910, in spite of her 1901 marriage to attorney Harvey Morris. Prior to the organizational meeting, Morris visited the other six charter members, inviting them to attend the meeting. She carefully chose women whose interests and aptitudes were compatible with her desire that the new club should study music.⁷⁹ Obviously, then, Morris knew each of the other charter members well enough to have already established a relationship with them.

⁷⁷ Many club memorial days are noted in minutes. One example occurred on 12 June 1902.

⁷⁸ Ladies' Piano Club Minutes, 20 August 1896, Ladies' Piano Club Records, Stevens Museum, Washington County Historical Society, Salem, Indiana; Nell Bare, "A Retrospect," Ladies' Piano Club Records.

⁷⁹ Bare, "A Retrospect," Ladies' Piano Club Minutes, 20 August 1896; Ladies' Piano Club Membership List, Ladies' Piano Club Records; Works Progress Administration, *Washington County, Indiana, Index to Marriage Records 1850-1920*, Book M, p. 29; Manuscript Census, Town of Salem, Washington County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population, 1910, in National Archives Microfilm Publication T624, Roll 387, Enumeration District 164, Page 22, hereafter referred to as 1910 Census, Washington County, ED 164, Page 22; Manuscript Census, Town of Salem, Washington County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population, 1920, in National Archives Microfilm Publication T624 Roll 471, Enumeration District 195,

Whereas in the Zerelda Reading Club, family relationships abounded between charter members, in Salem, the Ladies' Piano Club relied instead upon mutual interest, specifically their interest in and skill at playing the piano. Of the seven charter members, five were music teachers. Minnie Martin, Carrie St. John, Kate Williams, Mattie Tucker, and possibly Cora DePew were all most likely acquainted through their common occupation. No existing records determine prior affiliations between the remaining two women, Nell Bare and Edith Attkisson Rudder.⁸⁰

Over half of the seven charter members (four of seven) exhibited lasting club loyalty, remaining affiliated past 1910.⁸¹ These included Carrie St. John, Edith Attkisson Rudder, Mattie Tucker Morris, and Nell Bare. The other women remained in the club only briefly, most resigning within five years. Kate Williams resigned in 1900, Cora DePew circa 1902, and Minnie Martin during the 1902-1903 club year.⁸² Unlike the Zerelda Reading or Florentine clubs, whose records indicate that members deeply valued their club affiliations, available documents do not record the sentiments of Ladies' Piano Club members, making it impossible to determine the importance that they placed on participation.

The Florentine Club

Like the Zerelda Reading Club, available records do not indicate who initiated the first meeting of the Florentine Club. Early records do indicate that the group convened at the home of Katherine Hogshire, with Mary Harrision unanimously elected as the club's

Page 1, hereafter referred to as 1920 Census, Washington County, Enumeration District 195, Page 1; Manuscript Census, Town of Salem, Washington County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population 1880, in National Archives Microfilm Publication T9 Roll 321, Enumeration District 186, Page 2, hereafter referred to as 1880 Census, Washington County, ED 186, Page 2.

⁸⁰ Bare, "A Retrospect." See also Appendix.

⁸¹ After 1910, membership records for the Ladies' Piano Club are unavailable.

⁸² Ladies' Piano Club Membership List.

first president.⁸³ These women's leading roles at the initial meeting suggest that one of them may have been the club's founder.

The charter members of the Florentine Club tended to have a combination of prior familial and occupational relationships. Four of the thirteen women were teachers in the Lebanon school district. Daisy Tipton and Byrnia Smith both taught at the Central Building and likely would have been well acquainted. Bertha Martin was also a grade school teacher, and may have also taught at the Central Building. Hattie Cochran taught at the high school. Additionally, Gertrude Carroll taught school in Lebanon during the 1898-1899 school year before marrying Layton Parkhurst.⁸⁴ While not necessarily working at the same schools, in the small Lebanon school system, these teachers were all likely acquainted.

Geography played a role in other prior acquaintances. Several charter members were neighbors. Daisy Tipton lived at 312 S. East St., only a few houses away from Bertha Martin (324 S. East St.). The Perkins sisters – Esther, Bertha, and Ruth – lived at 217 S. Meridian St., near the residence of Byrnia Smith (303 S. Meridian).⁸⁵

Like the Zerelda Reading Club, family relationships became an important factor in Florentine organization. Seven of the twelve charter members, or 58 percent, of the Florentine Club had a family connection to at least one other woman present at the organizational meeting. In the Florentine Club, family relationships included cousins Helen Caldwell and Mary Harrison. Caldwell had lived with Harrison and her parents at least since the age of two. Her mother died prior to the 1880 census, at which time

⁸³ Florentine Club Minutes, 27 January 1900, Florentine Club Records, Cragun House, Boone County Historical Society, Lebanon, Indiana.

⁸⁴ See Appendix.

⁸⁵ *Lebanon Directory, 1900-1901* (Logansport: Longwell & Cummings, 1901).

Caldwell and her father, publisher D. E. Caldwell, were living with the Harrisons. D. E. Caldwell died sometime between 1880 and 1900, leaving her an orphan. She continued to live with her aunt and uncle until sometime after 1900. Thus, when Harrison was born around 1882, Caldwell probably would have seemed more like her sister than her cousin. Other family groups included three Perkins sisters (Esther, Ruth, and Bertha), and two Hogshire sisters (Alice and Katharine).⁸⁶

Unlike the Zerelda Reading Club, where business relationships among husbands and fathers may have resulted in prior affiliations, few of these affiliations seemingly existed for the women of the Florentine Club. Only Mary Harrison and Daisy Tipton's fathers shared a common occupation (attorney). Additionally, no common religious affiliation existed among the charter members. Religious preference is unknown for the majority of the women, but the three known affiliations, Bertha Martin, a Baptist, Alice Hogshire, a member of the Christian Church, and Gertrude Parkhurst, a Presbyterian, suggest that religion did not play a factor in organization.⁸⁷

Overall, while many superficial links were found among charter members, no one common affiliation unites the majority of these women. Known facts suggest that Florentine charter members would not have known the majority of other women present at the organizational meeting. Meeting minutes suggest otherwise. At the first gathering of the Florentine Club, several of the officers were elected unanimously, signifying the existence of prior relationships among the majority of the women present.⁸⁸ Possibly, then, these women had established friendships through another club meeting or social event.

⁸⁶ See Appendix.

⁸⁷ See Appendix.

⁸⁸ Florentine Club Minutes, 27 January 1900.

The Florentine clubwomen did not tend to remain lifelong members. However, the club remained an important part of their lives. When charter member Mary Harrison Shireman moved to Martinsville around 1905, she expressed these sentiments in a letter to the Florentine Club, stating

Those of you with whom I have been associated know how much the Florentine Club has always meant to me. It is one of the ties that binds me to Lebanon, and it is a great happiness to me to remember the hours I have spent in its circle – hours both pleasant and profitable...But, after all, while the Old Masters and works of art constitute a most charming study, there is a much sweeter lesson yet to be learned in our association with each other – that of friendship. This, at least, the club has taught me, and I inscribe myself its grateful and appreciative corresponding member.⁸⁹

Another member echoed the same sentiments in an essay she wrote as a club assignment about her ideal room. The essay began, "My house as I see it in my imagination every day stands on the southwest corner of a street crossing in a little city where I know nearly everybody and where there is a little club whose members are the best friends that I have."⁹⁰ Additional indications of club friendships can be found in the marriage announcements of charter members. When Alice Hogshire married in October 1902, the members of the Florentine Club were among the few witnesses present at the wedding. The newspaper reported that the ceremony was performed "in the presence of the immediate relatives and the members of the Florentine Club of which the bride was a member."⁹¹

Within the first ten years of the Florentine Club's existence, charter members had virtually disappeared from the roll. Katharine Hogshire and Hattie Cochran resigned from the club after marrying. Additional members moved from Lebanon. Bertha Martin

⁸⁹ Mary Harrison Shireman to the Zerelda Reading Club, no date, Florentine Club Records.

⁹⁰ No author, "My Ideal Room," no date, Florentine Club Records.

⁹¹ "Coons-Hogshire. Marriage of A Well-Known Lebanon Couple Yesterday Afternoon," *Lebanon Patriot*, 2 October 1902.

relocated to New York with her new husband, Mary Harrison Shireman transferred to Martinsville with her husband, and Daisy Tipton moved to Hamilton County with her father. Ruth Perkins, only 18 when the club was founded, may have left Lebanon to attend college. A year earlier upon her graduation from high school, the newspaper noted that she planned to study music. Alice Hogshire remained in the club after her marriage in 1902, but resigned sometime during the 1904-5 club year. Her reasons for resignation are unknown. Alice remained in Boone County at least until 1910, and her first child was not born until 1912. Berthee and Esther Perkins resigned their membership in 1905 for unknown reasons that may have been tied to the death of their father that same year. Esther later re-enrolled in the club and remained a member until her marriage in 1918. Available records do not indicate a motive for the resignations of the remaining charter members.⁹² Consequently, within a little more than five years, all but two of the charter members had left the club. Gertrude Parkhurst remained a member after giving birth to her daughter only a few months after the club formed, and ultimately remained active until her death in 1912. Helen Caldwell also continued to participate until her death sometime after 1930.⁹³

Generally speaking, charter membership in both the Florentine Club and the Zerelda Reading Club drew heavily from family ties. While the Zerelda clubwomen also relied on the business connections of their husbands, occupational relationships present among charter members of the Ladies' Piano and Florentine clubs tended to result from the women's own jobs, mostly as teachers. Thus, the composition of the three clubs illustrates a diversity of connections among charter clubwomen in Indiana.

⁹² See Appendix.

⁹³ "Mrs. Gertrude Parkhurst," *Lebanon Pioneer*, 10 October 1912; Florentine Club Membership List.

Characteristics of Charter Members

In addition to prior relationships, membership characteristics played an important role in determining a club's collective identity. Besides associating with friends, family, neighbors, etc., prior literature has suggested that clubwomen associated with women who shared similar characteristics. What, then, were the characteristics of the average charter member of an Indiana club? Did she differ in any way from the national clubwoman already studied by prior histories? An analysis of the shared characteristics of the Zerelda Reading Club, Ladies' Piano Club, and Florentine Club will begin to answer these questions.

The Zerelda Reading Club

Of the three clubs, the charter members of the Zerelda Reading Club most closely resembled the urban clubwomen who dominate club historiography. They tended to be in their forties, white, middle-class, and married. When the first meeting was called on 17 February 1886, seven of the eight charter members were in their forties and six were married. One was a widow. The eighth, and only member significantly different from the rest, was the twenty-two year old daughter of one of the other seven members. She was still single but would marry only two months later. Indeed, the club's acceptance of Mattie Thayer as a charter member foreshadowed a trend in its future: as new members were admitted throughout the next few years, a wide diversity in age, marital status, and maternal status would immediately develop.

The biggest divergence among charter members from the characteristics found by previous histories is the ages of their children. While there were no infants in this initial

group of women, of the six women who had children, half of them had children aged ten or younger. Since prior literature has suggested that mothers would remain completely devoted to their homes and families, this admittance of a large number of mothers with young children suggests that the women of the Zerelda Reading Club were not as strictly devoted to the Victorian ideals of motherhood, or at least that the rules of motherhood in Warsaw, Indiana, were not as strict as those practiced elsewhere. Documentation recording these mothers' motivations for joining the Zerelda Reading Club unfortunately does not exist.

The Ladies' Piano Club

Unlike the Zerelda Reading Club, the charter members of the Ladies' Piano Club were mostly young and single when the club formed in 1896. None of the seven charter members were married. Three would later marry; two while members and one after resigning her membership.⁹⁴ Of the two women who remained members after marriage, available records only indicate that one of these women had children. By 1900, Edith Attkisson Rudder had already given birth to one child, who died. In 1907, she gave birth to a second child. Despite giving birth to two children, Rudder remained a member of the Ladies' Piano Club well past 1910.⁹⁵ Significantly, in choosing to continue club participation, Rudder to some extent rejected the values of motherhood that historians of the nineteenth century assert were so closely followed by the majority of Victorian

⁹⁴ See Appendix.

⁹⁵ Ladies' Piano Club Membership List; Manuscript Census, Town of Salem, Washington County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population, 1900, in National Archives Microfilm Publication T623, Roll 412, Enumeration District 142, Page 9, hereafter referred to as 1900 Census, Washington County, ED 142, Page 9; 1910 Census, Washington County, ED 164, Page 22; Warder W. Stevens, *Centennial History of Washington County, Indiana: Its People, Industries, and Institutions with Biographical Sketches of Representative Citizens and Genealogical Records of Many of the Old Families* (Indianapolis: B.F. Bowen, 1916; reprint, Utica, Kentucky: McDowell Publications, 1987), 681-6.

women. Four of the seven charter members of the Ladies' Piano Club never married.⁹⁶ Historians of the Victorian period have noticed a certain stigma attached to single women, and perhaps this stigma accounts for the fact that few records document their lives.

In 1896, when the club organized, the average age of members was twenty-nine, although this number is slightly elevated by the fact that one of the seven members was forty-four years old. The other six members were all in their twenties. Five of the seven were employed as teachers. The only major divergence in membership was Minnie Martin, who at age forty-four, became the oldest charter member of the club. In fact, the only characteristic that she shared with the others was her training in music and career as a music teacher.⁹⁷

Like the Zerelda charter members, the women of the Ladies' Piano Club represented Salem's middle class. Their fathers (and later husbands) included a lawyer, bookkeeper, physician, carpenter, minister, and druggist.⁹⁸

The Florentine Club

The charter members of the Florentine Club more closely resembled the Ladies' Piano Club than the Zerelda Reading Club. Like the Ladies' Piano Club, they were the daughters of middle-class businessmen, rather than wives. In 1900, only one of the thirteen women had married, although all charter members were old enough to marry. The sole married member was pregnant with her first child. At the organizational meeting of the Florentine Club, the secretary noted the ladies present as "girls," but they

⁹⁶ See Appendix.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

were far from girls. While the youngest was eighteen years old, the majority present aged between twenty-four and thirty-two. Unlike the Zerelda charter members, five of the thirteen charter members of the Florentine Club, or 38 percent, were employed.⁹⁹ They were all white, middle-class, and well respected in their communities.¹⁰⁰

While the charter members of the three clubs were white and middle-class, a great diversity is evident in other characteristics. The women of the Zerelda Reading, Ladies' Piano, and Florentine clubs exhibited a wide range in age and marital status, illustrating that the characteristics of Indiana clubwomen do not conform to one single prototype.

New Membership

As clubs evolved, their memberships grew. Whereas charter members established a club, new admittees largely determined the future direction that a club would take. One would expect, then, that charter members would very carefully choose their club's next generation. Did new women share the characteristics of charter members or did membership diversify? If so, how soon did it diversify and how did the new clubwomen in the Zerelda Reading, Ladies' Piano, and Florentine clubs compare to new clubwomen nationwide?

⁹⁹ See Appendix; Florentine Club Minutes, 27 January 1900.

¹⁰⁰ When Bertha Martin married in 1901, the newspaper described her as "a prominent worker in the Baptist church in which she has served as organist and as a leader in the Sunday school and BYPU" ("Powell-Martin Marriage of two Estimable Young People Yesterday Afternoon," *Lebanon Patriot*, 8 August 1901). Similarly, Alice Hogshire and her fiancé were described as coming "...from one of the best respected families of the community. Both are considered among the best people of the community and their union is looked upon as exceedingly appropriate" ("Coons-Hogshire Marriage of a Well-known Lebanon Couple Yesterday Afternoon," *Lebanon Patriot*, 2 October 1902). Finally, when charter member Gertrude Carroll Parkhurst died in 1912, the newspapers wrote "she possessed a strong personality, and a temperament that enabled her to throw every ounce of her energy into whatever task she set herself to. She won the love and esteem of all with whom she came into contact" ("Mrs. Gertrude Parkhurst," *Lebanon Pioneer*, 10 October 1912).

The Zerelda Reading Club

Beginning with a modest charter membership of eight, the Zerelda Reading Club quickly expanded. Within a short period of time it shifted from a homogenous group to a diverse membership. Rather unexpectedly, the club immediately opened its doors to women of all ages and marital statuses. Notably, women with young children continued to join the club, and those who would become pregnant as members tended not to resign after their children were born. Invitations to join the club were, however, extended only to those who were recommended by a Zerelda clubwoman. Thus, new admittees tended to have a prior affiliation with at least one current member.¹⁰¹

Almost immediately after the club began to admit new members, their characteristics changed. By 1890, the club had admitted five teens, nine women in their twenties, five women in their thirties, seven women in their forties, two women in their fifties, and one woman whose age could not be determined. While the majority remained married (20), a significant number (9) were single.¹⁰²

By the time the Zerelda Reading Club had been in existence for five years, ten sets of mothers and daughters could be found on club membership lists. In every instance except charter members Sarah and Mattie Thayer, mothers joined the club before their daughters. Daughters tended to be adult women; six in ten had graduated from high school. Four were between the ages of ten and fifteen. This young age must have proved a challenge to the older clubwomen, because on 13 August 1890, the club voted to pass a

¹⁰¹ Zerelda Reading Club Constitution, 1886, Zerelda Reading Club Records.

¹⁰² See Appendix.

motion stating that all children of Zerelda members were invited to attend meetings, but "hereafter no person shall be admitted as a member until after sixteen years of age."¹⁰³

In a significant divergence from the eastern clubs previously studied, the number of new members with children under the age of ten outnumbered those with adult children. Ten women had children under the age of ten, whereas only six members had all adult children. Nine women had no children; most of these were members in their teens and early twenties. As younger members started their families, a significant portion remained in the club after the birth of their first child. Out of six known cases, only one woman, Mattie Hendee, resigned her membership after her child was born. Clara Beck Funk, Trella Brubaker, Ora Funk, Regina Bitner, and Mabel Haymond Stephenson all retained their membership after giving birth to their children. Mattie Hendee later returned to the club after her children had grown.¹⁰⁴

Besides inconsistencies in age and motherhood from the characteristics discovered in prior histories, the admittance of Julia Trish, a German immigrant, to club membership directly disputes the observation that study clubs would not have opened their membership to non-natives. Trish, a native of Holstein, immigrated to the United States with her husband Lewis sometime before 1860. Prior literature has suggested that while clubwomen would work on behalf of the immigrant, they would not have invited

¹⁰³ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 13 August 1890.

¹⁰⁴ See Appendix. Mattie Hendee's first child, Marie, was born in 1888 or 1889. Mattie resigned her membership in 1889. Clara Beck Funk gave birth to two children between the time she joined the club in 1887 and her death in 1890, at which time she remained an active Zerelda member. Trella Wood Brubaker's son Robert was born in 1890 and Lawrence in 1893; Trella did not resign her membership until sometime after 1896. Ora Funk joined the Zerelda Reading Club in 1888, when her first son, Joseph, was still an infant. Her second child, Helen, was born in 1889. Ora remained a club member until 1947. Regina Bitner was a member of the Zerelda Reading Club from 1888 to 1953. At some point during this time, she gave birth to two sons, as evidenced by the letter they wrote to the club upon her death in 1959.

an immigrant woman to join their club. Karen Blair argues that Irish and German immigrants would not have been invited to join a white woman's study club.¹⁰⁵

Perhaps Trish's acceptance into Zerelda membership was less an indication of Warsaw's (or the Zerelda's) welcoming attitude towards immigrants, than a result of her own personal efforts to assimilate. Her years in the community and husband's occupation as a prominent wagon maker certainly gave her the needed connections to assimilate. Defying even more cultural stereotypes, Julia became a leading member of Warsaw's Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). She was a founding member of the Warsaw chapter in the 1870s, and even traveled across the state lecturing on temperance. This was a huge contradiction because, as Peggy Siegel demonstrates in her examination of Fort Wayne, German Americans tended to remain staunchly anti-temperance.¹⁰⁶

Because membership was based on recommendation, as the club admitted new women, they tended to invite those with the same types of family and business connections that had united charter members. A significant number of neighbors also joined the club. The largest cluster of women to eventually join the club was related to Victoria Moon and Mary Binns. These included their sister-in-law Mary Beck, and niece, Mary Beck's daughter, Clara Beck Funk. Victoria's sister-in-law Nancy Bitner and her daughter Regina Bowser also joined the club. In addition, Clara Beck Funk's mother-in-law Salome Funk, Salome's other daughter-in-law Ora Funk, and her sister-in-law Florence Funk, all became early club members.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁵ Blair, *Torchbearers*, 4, 37; Blair, *Clubwoman as Feminist*, 63-64.

¹⁰⁶Manuscript Census, Wayne Township, Kosciusko County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population, 1860, in National Archives Microfilm Publication M653, Roll 273, page 125, hereafter referred to as 1860 Census, Kosciusko County, page 125; Peggy Seigel, "Winning the Vote in Fort Wayne, Indiana: The Long, Cautious Journey in a German American City," *Indiana Magazine of History* 102 (September 2006): 221, 229.

¹⁰⁷ Zerelda Reading Club Membership Lists, 1886-1890.

Business relationships continued to result in connections for some women. John Trish (Julia) and Edward Moon (Victoria) had partnered in a wagon business several years earlier. William Conrad (Mamie) and Peter Conrad (Sue) also partnered in a wagon business, and Frank Hetrick (Rose) became one of their carriage trimmers. Edgar Haymond (Emma), Daniel Bitner (Nancy), William Funk (Florence), Thomas Woods (Catharine), Oliver Jaques (Lucretia), Louis Ripple (Jennie), Henry Comstock (Rose), and William Wood (Mattie), all held city or county offices.¹⁰⁸ In addition, at least seven new members were neighbors to a woman who had already joined the club.¹⁰⁹

Thus, the Zerelda clubwomen mostly increased their numbers with the addition of members with whom they had developed relationships. These affiliations resulted in the admittance of women of a wider variety of ages and life experiences, and tended to be a more important factor in admittance than shared characteristics. More unexpectedly, however, are clues pointing towards the possibility that in some instances, membership in the Zerelda Reading Club may have provided members' husbands with opportunities to make business contacts. Besides the possibility that the Zerelda women may have encouraged these business relationships, their husbands would have had plenty of opportunities to mingle during the many social evenings held by the club.¹¹⁰ In 1901, when bank president Silas W. Chipman, husband of member Sarah M. Chipman, reorganized the State Bank of Warsaw, Edgar Haymond (Emma) became his vice-

¹⁰⁸ See Appendix.

¹⁰⁹ See Appendix. Charter members Mary Binns and Jennie Ripple lived on South Indiana St. close to new members Mattie Wood and Salome Funk. Charter members Sarah Thayer and Sarah Graves Chapman lived on Center St. near new members Lucretia Jaques and Carrie Jaques. Charter member Barbara Brown lived on Fort Wayne St. near new members Mary Beck and Sarah Chipman. Charter members Victoria Moon and Emma Haymond lived on Buffalo St. near new member Kittie Lash. New members Florence Funk and Julia Trish both lived on Washington St. *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889.*

¹¹⁰ See Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 22 June 1888, 29 January 1890, 10 February 1891.

president, and Abe Brubaker (Trella) his cashier.¹¹¹ In another instance, Trella Brubaker's father A. G. Wood, a prominent local attorney, trained Regina Bowser's husband Francis for a career in law. They became partners in the firm Wood and Bowser sometime after 1890.¹¹² It is important to note, however, that other affiliations between these men may have existed; Zerelda membership is only one possible explanation for their connection.

Unlike the club's first generation, the members who joined within the first five years of the Zerelda Reading Club's existence mostly left no traceable record explaining why they resigned. While only three members' deaths could be confirmed, the ages of nine others at the time of their resignations, ranging from seventy to ninety-six, suggest that they either died or were forced to resign due to poor health. Three others resigned their memberships after moving from Warsaw.¹¹³

The Ladies' Piano Club

The membership of the Ladies' Piano Club did not diversify as greatly as that of the Zerelda Reading Club within its first five years. Of the fourteen new members admitted between 1896 and 1901, 71 percent were in their twenties (10). One was in her thirties, two were in their late teens, and one woman was in her fifties.¹¹⁴

While membership age did not greatly diversify, marital status did. Of the seventeen newly admitted clubwomen, 59 percent were married, as opposed to zero of the original charter members. Only three of the seven single charter members would

¹¹¹ *Progressive Men and Women of Kosciusko County, Indiana* (Logansport: B.F. Bowen, 1902), 223-5.

¹¹² *Progressive Men and Women of Kosciusko County*, 304-6.

¹¹³ See Appendix.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

eventually marry.¹¹⁵ Unlike the Zerelda Reading Club, married members did not tend to have young children. Of the ten married women, as far as is known, only two had young children. Clara Ramsy's son Dwight was one year old and Mary Shanks' daughter Helen was two. Additionally, members almost all resigned upon the birth of a new child.¹¹⁶

Finally, like the charter members, fathers and husbands tended to be respected town businessmen. Occupations included a physician, several lawyers, the manager of a milling company, a couple of merchants, a banker, a bookkeeper, a bank cashier, a superintendent of schools, and a druggist. In addition, five of the seven single members held positions of their own. Three were music teachers, one was a milliner, and one was a bookkeeper.¹¹⁷

Like the charter clubwomen, family relationships among new members remained minimal. Daisy Attkisson was the sister of charter member Edith Attkisson Rudder and Maud Wilson may have been the sister-in-law of Nina Wilson. Otherwise, no family relationships could be determined. In addition, fewer of the new members were related through their occupations. Only three of the seventeen women were music teachers as compared to five of the seven charter members. The Ladies' Piano Club did not rely on husbands' or fathers' business connections as the Zerelda clubwomen had done. Only one such relationship appears to have existed: Clara Voyles' father, Samuel, practiced law with Harvey Morris, the husband of charter member Mattie Tucker Morris.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ Ibid.; Ladies' Piano Club Membership List.

¹¹⁷ See Appendix.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.; Stevens, *Centennial History of Washington County*, 842-3.

In all, new members did not tend to remain in the club for many years. By 1910, the last year that membership lists are available, only six of the seventeen new members still appeared on membership lists.¹¹⁹

The Florentine Club

In the first year after the Florentine Club organized, five new members joined. These were Lucy Nichols, Leah Cory, Gertrude Neal, Lydia Bell, and Gertrude Hardy. Gertrude Hardy was a former classmate of Ruth Perkins. Leah Cory's brother taught school with Hattie Cochran. Lydia Bell taught school at the Central Building with Bertha Martin, Daisy Tipton, Rose Sims, and Byrnia Smith. Gertrude Neal was the sister-in-law of George Hogshire, brother of Kate and Alice. She was also a teacher in Lebanon and lived at George Hogshire's residence. Available records do not indicate Lucy Nichols' relationship to any of the Florentine women.¹²⁰ Thus, a variety of family members, co-workers, and neighbors became the next women to join the Florentine Club. As with the Zerelda Reading Club and the Ladies' Piano Club, new members were admitted by recommendation of a current clubwoman, suggesting that new women would all have been a friend or relative of at least one charter member.¹²¹

In all, five years later in 1904, the Florentine Club had admitted eleven new members. These new women tended to be slightly younger than those who founded the club, with an age range between nineteen and twenty-five, and an average age of twenty-one. None of these women were married, and three were teachers. All were white and

¹¹⁹ Ladies' Piano Club Membership List.

¹²⁰ "Lebanon Teachers List of those Elected for Next Year Some Resignations Filed," *Lebanon Pioneer*, 18 May 1899; "Nineteen Finish the Course of Study in the Lebanon School," *Lebanon Pioneer*, 11 May 1899; 1900 Census, Boone County, ED 5, Page 11.

¹²¹ Florentine Club Constitution, Florentine Club Records.

middle class. Additionally, like charter members, most were still searching for their place in Lebanon society, not yet married, and sometimes just beginning careers. As a result, membership would not tend to have the stability found in the Zerelda Reading Club. New women continued to be mainstream, well-liked residents of Lebanon.¹²² The new members of the Florentine Club largely exhibited the same characteristics and connections as charter members. Unlike the Zerelda Reading Club, which quickly expanded its membership to include a diversity of ages, marital statuses, and life experiences, within its first five years of existence the Florentine Club mostly remained a homogenous group of young, single women.

The women who joined the Florentine Club within its first five years exhibited similar habits of membership, largely resigning within a few years. Both Leah Cory and Gertrude Hardy left the club after marrying and moving from town. Mae Gabriel likewise resigned after marrying. The rest tended to stay only a few years after joining the club. By 1914, Lucy Nichols, Gertrude Neal, Hannah Bell, Edith Sims, Grace Neal, and Jennie Pugh had all disappeared from club rolls. Of this group, only Lydia Bell remained a member of the club past 1920.¹²³

Of the three women's clubs, the Zerelda Reading Club became the most diverse, and most stable, body of women. While Florentine members remained young and single, the Ladies' Piano Club opened its doors to married women, although these women remained young and did not tend to have children. In both instances, club members

¹²² Edith Sims's announcement noted, "Both of the contracting parties are well known and highly respected" ("Nuptial Knot Tied, Well Known Young People Take Sacred Vows, Will Reside in Warsaw," *Lebanon Patriot*, 25 October 1906). When Leah Cory married Guy Voris, her marriage announcement read, "Mrs. Voris is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Cory, and is well and popularly known" ("Voris-Cory Marriage," *Lebanon Patriot*, 17 April 1902).

¹²³ See Appendix; Florentine Club Membership List.

tended to remain on the rolls for only a few years. Only the Zerelda clubwomen diversified to include women of all ages, and welcomed young mothers into their ranks. In return, their members tended to be intensely loyal, remaining in the club for decades.

A Note On Unrepresented Groups

Circumstances resulted in the absence of certain types of members from the Zerelda Reading, Ladies' Piano, and Florentine clubs. Accessibility was one major factor. Few transportation options were available; members could either walk to meetings or ride in a carriage. As a result, almost all early members of the three clubs lived within their city's limits. For example, while two farmers' wives became charter members of the Zerelda Reading Club, neither actually lived at their farms, and instead owned homes in town. Accessibility, however, was not merely a measure of geography but also of class. While some clubwomen may have had an aversion to the admittance of working-class women to club membership, practical reasons most likely trumped personal feelings. Whereas a combination of advances in household technology and the widespread use of domestic servants provided middle class women with the leisure time necessary to participate in club work, working class women could not afford these conveniences.¹²⁴

Furthermore, the Zerelda Reading, Ladies' Piano, and Florentine clubwomen all desired their clubs to be cohesive, intimate groups of friends. In achieving this goal, age would become a major factor in membership. The Zerelda Reading Club, as noted earlier, encouraged a diversity of ages among members, but eventually set a minimum age of sixteen after daughters as young as ten sought membership in their mother's club.

¹²⁴ Blair, *Clubwoman as Feminist*, 60.

This age restriction most likely represents a practical, rather than an elitist attitude, as younger girls would have changed the dynamics of the club and required a larger degree of supervision. While having no written restrictions on age, the Ladies' Piano Club and Florentine Club tended towards a much more homogenous age population. Early members' ages ranged roughly within a decade of each other. Besides being the possible result of a desire to associate with women of their own age, the close age range may also have been merely a coincidence, as women tended to bond with those with whom they had the most in common.

Karen Blair has demonstrated that for many of the eastern, urban women she studied, the women's club functioned as a tool of social mobility. To be a part of the right club was a status symbol and a matter of prestige. Women joining for these reasons were more likely to guard their clubs against the infiltration of those not highly esteemed in the community.¹²⁵ Even for clubwomen who were not concerned with prestige, inviting a woman of a different class or race to join their club would have posed a major problem. When women's study clubs first emerged in the last decades of the nineteenth century, resistance occurred from husbands, fathers, boyfriends, sons, and in some instances mothers and daughters who disapproved of a woman's decision to seek a life outside of her home. The average woman who was brave enough to face such criticism did not wish to push further boundaries. She would not have wanted to attract additional negative attention, and as a result, would have shied away from associating with women of whom her family would not approve. This would have been especially true of the Zerelda Reading Club, which emerged as one of the first clubs in Warsaw. On its forty-eighth anniversary, one member recalled, "Everybody predicted failure, everybody

¹²⁵ Ibid., 63, 66.

looked for failure, some hoped for it."¹²⁶ As a result of these factors, African American and working-class women are distinctly absent from the rolls of all three clubs.

Summary

Clubwomen have historically tended to associate with those with whom they were most comfortable. As a result, most historians studying women's clubs characterize clubwomen as a largely homogenous group who shared a common class, age, and marital status. In choosing the women with whom they would associate, charter members of the Zerelda Reading Club, the Ladies' Piano Club, and the Florentine Club both mirrored the trends discovered in prior histories and diverged from them. All three clubs remained middle-class institutions. While the vast majority of Zerelda Reading Club charter members were middle-aged and married, a significant number of these women were the mothers of young children, a characteristic that prior histories did not identify. The charter members of the Ladies' Piano and Florentine clubs, unlike the Zerelda Reading Club, were mostly single, younger, and unsettled. The presence of similar characteristics resembles the urban clubs discussed in earlier studies.

While the Florentine and Ladies' Piano clubs tended to remain homogenous groups during their first five years, the Zerelda Reading Club quickly expanded its membership to a wider variety of women. Within its first five years, a considerable number of young women and single women joined the club. Most significantly, Zerelda members with young children soon slightly outnumbered those with teenage or adult children. Almost all women who gave birth to their first child after joining the club chose not to resign. Prior literature focusing on the urban clubwoman has suggested that

¹²⁶ No author, "Our Forty-Eighth Birthday," no date, Zerelda Reading Club Records.

young mothers in the late nineteenth century would never stray from the Victorian ideals of motherhood and abandon their children to spend a few hours attending a club meeting. In the case of the Zerelda members, because club records prove that the women became close friends, maybe young mothers simply craved the continued support of these women. Had any of the young mothers left diaries or letters, however, perhaps these documents would have shown that their ability to become or remain Zerelda members while raising a young child resulted from patterns of association that were unique to a small-town environment. Perhaps the atmosphere of Warsaw's small community accepted, or at least tolerated, the participation of young mothers in study clubs.

Thus, membership characteristics were not nearly as straightforward as prior histories suggest. The question remaining, then, is to what extent was the makeup of club membership a direct result of life in a smaller, more rural environment? In beginning to explore this question, this chapter has demonstrated that the vast majority of club members had prior affiliations as family members, business associates, neighbors, and friends. Members also tended to be the wives and daughters of each city's most respected men. This would become important later as the Zerelda Reading, Ladies' Piano, and Florentine clubs began civic improvement activities, because, as Nancy Woloch has suggested, "if women's clubs had influence, it often depended as much on who their members were as on what they did."¹²⁷

After analyzing the membership of the three clubs, it is apparent that the organization and characteristics of study club membership in Indiana were much more diverse than in the eastern clubs studied by earlier histories. Instead, a wide range in

¹²⁷ Nancy Woloch, *Women and the American Experience*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 1994), 290.

variations resulted from the circumstances under which individual clubs organized. This analysis of membership characteristics is therefore valuable, as it shows that the type of women who joined a women's club varied widely from place to place.

CHAPTER 2: ORGANIZATION

The meetings of most women's clubs were highly structured, following a strict order of business based on parliamentary procedure. Because clubs drew their constitutions, by-laws, and club purposes from the same types of sources, these documents exhibited similar language and organizational style. Women from the East, West, Midwest, and South all produced club documents with striking similarities. How, then, did a club get started, and what factors drove this conformity to the same organizational patterns? This chapter will explore the influences and decisions made by members of the Zerelda Reading Club, the Ladies' Piano Club, and the Florentine Club when creating their organizational identities.

Influences

Charter members of women's clubs throughout the country often faced a dilemma when establishing their clubs. While a minority of them mastered parliamentary procedure at college or through participation in early voluntary associations, the majority of clubwomen in the late nineteenth century had no idea where to begin.¹²⁸ As a result, most clubs borrowed ideas from extant groups, thus creating a pool of highly similar club constitutions, by-laws, purposes, and minutes.

Whether a club emerged as first in its town or one among many, a new women's study club always had plenty of prior clubs to inspire its creation. Karen Blair has argued that after Sorosis and the New England Woman's Club organized in 1868, not a club

¹²⁸ Theodora Penny Martin, *The Sound of Our Own Voices: Women's Study Clubs, 1860-1910* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987), 65.

emerged throughout the United States that was not aware of their precedent.¹²⁹ By 1873, American women had an even more concrete model to follow. Julia Ward Howe's widely circulated speech in October 1873 before the Association for the Advancement of Women, titled "How Can Women Best Associate?" laid the organizational groundwork for the first generation of clubwomen.¹³⁰ Howe was a well-known eastern abolitionist and suffragette. Besides providing a philosophical justification for the existence of women's clubs, she addressed the creation of club constitutions, election of officers, taxation of members, and topics of study.¹³¹

Whereas the Zerelda Reading Club organized at a time when club activity had just begun to spread, by the time the Ladies' Piano and Florentine clubs organized, many more examples had become available after which they could model themselves. The General Federation of Women's Clubs organized in 1890, and soon established a committee on reciprocity. This committee collected programs, constitutions, etc. from its member clubs and disseminated the information to those interested in borrowing ideas.¹³²

By the early 1890s, women interested in organizing a club were able to gain sound advice from a variety of print sources. There was no shortage of women's magazines willing to share their perspectives on club organization.¹³³ Popular magazines included *Godey's Lady's Book*, *The Ladies' Companion*, *McClure's Magazine*, and the *Ladies Home Journal*, although its editor, Edward Bok, remained staunchly anti-

¹²⁹ Karen Blair, *The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1980), 57.

¹³⁰ Martin, *Sound of Our Own Voices*, 65; Julia Ward Howe, "How Can Women Best Associate?" in *Papers and Letters Presented at the First Woman's Congress of the Association for the Advancement of Women October, 1873* (New York: Mrs. William Ballard, 1874), 5-10.

¹³¹ Howe, "How Can Women Best Associate?" 8.

¹³² Mary I. Wood, *The History of the General Federation of Women's Clubs for the First Twenty-Two Years of its Organization* (New York: General Federation of Women's Clubs, 1912), 75.

¹³³ Martin, *Sound of Our Own Voices*, 59.

clubwoman. He thought that women should confine their activities to the home, and believed women's clubs to be frivolous organizations.¹³⁴ The General Federation of Women's Clubs also published a monthly magazine. Parliamentary manuals remained popular sources of information on club organization, and by 1893 women were singing the praises of Harriett Shattuck's *The Woman's Manual of Parliamentary Law*, first printed in 1891. Shattuck's manual offered sound advice on club organization and rules of parliamentary procedure. Members of the General Federation of Women's Clubs endorsed *The Woman's Manual of Parliamentary Law* in their display at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair.¹³⁵

More personal influences may have inspired the organization of other clubs. When clubwomen moved, they often formed clubs based on the structure of their former organizations. Other women decided to organize a woman's club after visiting or communicating through letters with family and friends who belonged to a club. Theodora Martin has further established that the general structure followed by women's study clubs appears to be modeled after women's colleges. She notes similarities in required attendance, assignments, club mottoes and badges, and the popular club year of September through May.¹³⁶

Perhaps the biggest influence on women's clubs to emerge in the decade of the 1890s, however, was the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893. The exposition provided an opportunity for women to gather and learn about women's social and benevolent organizations. In the years preceding the Chicago World's Fair, Congress

¹³⁴ Ray E. Boomhower, *The Country Contributor: The Life and Times of Juliet V. Strauss* (Carmel: Guild Press of Indiana, 1998), 67.

¹³⁵ Wood, *History General Federation of Women's Clubs*, 57.

¹³⁶ Martin, *Sound of Our Own Voices*, 58, 68-69.

appointed a Board of Lady Managers, largely made up of Chicago clubwomen, to raise funds for, design, and oversee the construction of a Woman's Building. The resultant structure housed a variety of exhibits of interest to women, including sample club yearbooks, study guides, constitutions, literature by female authors, and pictures of women's clubhouses. Women of all ages, backgrounds, and nationalities attended the fair and viewed the exhibits in the Woman's Building.¹³⁷ Historian Anne Firor Scott contends that for this reason, 1893 became a turning point in the club movement:

Thousands of women...were exposed for the first time to the accomplishments and the organizations so tellingly displayed not only in the Woman's Building but in many other exhibits as well, and who listened to the women speaking in any one of the two hundred auxiliary cultural, artistic, and scientific congresses they happened to attend.¹³⁸

The World's Fair attracted a wide audience of women, and with Indiana's proximity to Chicago, a large number of Hoosier women attended. Indiana clubs that paid their dues to the Indiana Federation of Clubs or to the General Federation of Women's Clubs received constant communication from female organizers of the Chicago World's Fair. The minutes of the Zerelda Reading Club provide a testament to the far-reaching voice of these organizers. Beginning in November 1892, the club received communication from Indianapolis clubwoman May Wright Sewall and other organizers of the Women's Building regarding their progress, asking for donations and club programs for display, and inviting members to the World's Congress of Representative Women.¹³⁹ The Zerelda

¹³⁷ Anne Ruggles Gere, *Intimate Practices: Literacy and Cultural Work in U.S. Women's Clubs, 1880-1920* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 8, 154; Anne Firor Scott, *Natural Allies: Women's Associations in American History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 128, 130-1, 134; Jane Cunningham Croly, *The History of the Woman's Club Movement in America* (New York: H.G. Allen & Co., 1898), ix.

¹³⁸ Scott, *Natural Allies*, 131.

¹³⁹ See Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, November 1892, January 1893, 24-25 April 1893, Zerelda Reading Club Records, Old Jail Museum, Kosciusko County Historical Society, Warsaw, Indiana.

members honored most of these requests, and even appointed a delegate to represent the club at the fair.¹⁴⁰

The Zerelda Reading Club

When the Zerelda Reading Club organized in 1886, one other women's study club already existed in Warsaw. The Warsaw Reading Club had organized six years earlier. In a community of Warsaw's size, charter members would have been aware of the Warsaw Reading Club's existence and may have been friends with, or relatives of, some of its members. Perhaps membership of the two clubs overlapped, as Theodora Martin has suggests that often women from a pioneer study club would go on to found another club in their town.¹⁴¹ Unfortunately, because none of the Warsaw Reading Club's records survive, it is impossible to draw any definite conclusions as to their influences on the organization of the Zerelda Reading Club.

Most likely, in the 1880s the majority of the Zerelda Reading Club's knowledge of prior clubs would have come from local influences or personal communication with friends or relatives who belonged to a women's club elsewhere. The national federation, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, would eventually prove a valuable resource for new clubs by offering model constitutions and program booklets, but did not form until 1890. Additionally, most women's magazines did not begin to publish articles about study clubs until after they reached their peak in popularity during the 1890s. Thus, the women of the Zerelda Reading Club would have had to be more creative in finding models for their organization. Perhaps if they were not able to obtain help from the

¹⁴⁰ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 9 May, 15 May 1893.

¹⁴¹ Martin, *Sound of Our Own Voices*, 81.

Warsaw Reading Club, charter members' husbands may have provided some assistance in creating organizational documents. As an attorney, Edgar Haymond would have been quite familiar with such papers. In addition, several husbands belonged to local lodges and men's clubs, and may have provided model constitutions for their wives to follow.

Whatever their influences may have been, charter members remembered themselves as a unique organization, formed without anyone's help. On their forty-eighth anniversary in 1934, one charter member recalled, "We were a very independent organization. We had to be. We had nothing to tie to. No older clubs around that we might pattern after. Nothing that we could call precedent on which we might lay all our mistakes, and shortcomings. It was an uncharted sea...."¹⁴² In reality, of course, the "sea" had already been tested by the Warsaw Reading Club.

The Ladies' Piano Club

By the time the Ladies' Piano Club organized in 1896, it was no longer necessary for charter members to look within their own community for model clubs and ideas. Both general knowledge of the resources mentioned above and particular resources for their unique identity as a music study club were available for their use.

The Ladies' Piano Club was the second study club to form in Salem. The Woman's Club of Salem organized in 1891. This early club formed for the general purpose of study. Available records do not indicate the names of charter members, so it is unknown if any were related to charter members of the Ladies' Piano Club or if

¹⁴² "Our Forty-Eighth Birthday," 1934, in Zerelda Reading Club Records.

membership overlapped. Regardless, the charter members of the Ladies' Piano Club were certainly aware of their existence.¹⁴³

Additionally, the five music teachers who became members of the Ladies' Piano Club most likely received some training outside of their communities. While Indiana law did not mandate that teachers receive any training, but only that they pass a teachers' exam, as talented musicians, at least some of the five teachers may have trained for a short time in a larger city.¹⁴⁴ If so, these members would have been exposed to a women's club, or a college club if they attended a music school.

As a music club, the Ladies' Piano Club may have followed the precedent of clubs with a similar interest. By 1893, Indiana had at least three amateur music clubs and a movement for a national federation was underway.¹⁴⁵ In response to a gathering at the Chicago World's Fair, Rose Fay Thomas invited the forty-two known women's music clubs in the country to join her for a meeting to discuss the possibility of federation. At the meeting, invitees discussed goals that included encouraging the formation of new clubs. In the end, however, enough interest would not be generated to officially organize an amateur women's music federation until the winter of 1898.¹⁴⁶ Indiana clubs eagerly joined the new Federation, but would not organize the affiliate Indiana Federation of

¹⁴³ Warder W. Stevens, *Centennial History of Washington County, Indiana: Its People, Industries, and Institutions with Biographical Sketches of Representative Citizens and Genealogical Records of Many of the Old Families* (Indianapolis: B.F. Bowen, 1916; reprint: Utica, Kentucky: McDowell Publications, 1987), 375.

¹⁴⁴ Harrison Burns, *Annotated Statutes of the State of Indiana Showing the General Statutes in Force January 1, 1894*, vol. 3 (Indianapolis: Bowen-Merrill Co., 1894), 33.

¹⁴⁵ The three Indiana music study clubs present at the Chicago World's Fair of 1893 were the Matinee Musicale Club (Lafayette), the Morning Musicale Club (Fort Wayne), and the Ladies' Matinee Musicale (Indianapolis). Blanche Foster Boruff, *Women of Indiana* (Indianapolis: M. Farson, Publisher, 1941), 54.

¹⁴⁶ Karen Blair, *The Torchbearers: Women and their Amateur Arts Associations in America, 1890-1930* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 5, 49.

Music Clubs until 1918.¹⁴⁷ The women of the Ladies' Piano club could thus not only look to local, personal, and print sources for inspiration, but also to the growing number of music study clubs networking throughout the country.

The Florentine Club

By 1900, fourteen women's clubs had organized in Lebanon. As far as is known, all of these clubs began during the 1890s, and may have provided guidance to the Florentine Club as they planned and created their own organizational documents. In fact, members had many opportunities to become familiar with other local clubs' structures, as its charter members included women who had either participated in another club or who had a relative who was a member of another club.

The Tourist Club, for example, founded in 1895, had several connections to the members of the Florentine Club. Charter member Jennie Ralston's husband Samuel employed Iva Flanigan as his stenographer. Additionally, one of the early women to join the Tourist Club was Phoebe Harrison, mother of Mary Harrison and aunt of Helen Caldwell. Another early Tourist Club member, Joan Hogshire, may have been a relation to Florentine members Alice and Katharine Hogshire.¹⁴⁸

Perhaps more significantly, a number of Florentine charter members had previously joined another women's club in Lebanon. While no records of these early clubs exist to prove exactly how many charter members may have been active in a prior club, an 1899 article in the *Lebanon Pioneer* announcing the formation of a city federation of clubs includes several familiar names. Iva Flanigan was listed as a delegate

¹⁴⁷ Boruff, *Women of Indiana*, 54.

¹⁴⁸ Boone County Historical Society, *History of Boone County, Indiana* (Lebanon, Indiana: privately printed, 1984), 75.

from the Lebanon Literary and Eucre Clubs. Mary Harrison and Bertha Martin were delegates from the University Extension Club.¹⁴⁹ As a result of their connections to prior clubs, the charter members of the Florentine Club would have had prior knowledge of and possibly access to the constitutions and by-laws of other Lebanon clubs. Bertha Martin, for example, served on the committee to create the Florentine constitution.¹⁵⁰

Purposes

While clubs had many influences from which to draw, their choice of a written objective provides the most profound statement of charter members' goals and expectations. Most study clubs asserted generalized statements of their intent to cultivate cultural education among their members. For these women, the main factor driving them to associate was a desire to learn. In fact, Theodora Martin has argued that the club whose statement of purpose did not include improvement was rare.¹⁵¹

Overall, despite differences in statements of purpose, study club members tended to share the same desire to create a sphere for themselves outside of the home. Harriet Sigerman has noted that while these women endeavored to increase their influence in their larger communities, they accepted their roles as wives and mothers and attempted to channel their worldviews through this perspective. Mrs. John Dickinson Sherman recalled, "However varied the purpose of the individual club, the mass of the membership has stood for certain cardinal principles of American life that make for the good of the

¹⁴⁹ Boone County Historical Society, *History of Boone, County, Indiana*, 75; "Permanent Organization, Federation of Clubs Taking up Cemetery Question and Other Movements," *Lebanon Pioneer*, 8 June 1899.

¹⁵⁰ Florentine Club Minutes, 27 January 1900, in Florentine Club Records, Cragun House, Boone County Historical Society, Lebanon, Indiana.

¹⁵¹ Gere, *Intimate Practices*, 178; Martin, *Sound of Our Own Voices*, 38, 57, 60, 62.

community – such things as education, better schools, patriotism, temperance, and the protection of women and children."¹⁵² Besides statements of purpose, club names provided valuable insights into an individual club's goals and aspirations. Anne Gere contends, "By naming themselves and recording the conversations that decided these names, clubwomen wrote themselves into the larger society on their own terms, appropriating and redefining such words as clubs and women to describe themselves and their activities."¹⁵³

Just as Stacey Horstmann Gatti found that the women of Setauket organized their club by modifying the design of well-known clubs to meet their local needs, the Zerelda Reading, Ladies' Piano, and Florentine clubs all devised their purposes under the same circumstances. These women conformed to earlier standards of practice in writing their own statements of purpose, but in doing so intended to create an organization devoted to their particular interests.¹⁵⁴

The Zerelda Reading Club

The Zerelda Reading Club was the most open-minded of the three groups in terms of interests. One of the earliest women's clubs in Warsaw, it organized with a thirst for knowledge unparalleled by the Ladies' Piano Club or the Florentine Club. In the preamble to their first constitution, Zerelda Reading Club members noted that they organized "In the hope and with the object of attaining a higher, broader, and better

¹⁵² Mrs. John Dickinson Sherman, "The Women's Clubs in the Middle Western States," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 28 (September 1906): 29; Harriet Sigerman, "Laborers for Liberty 1865-1890" in Nancy Cott, *No Small Courage: A History of Women in the United States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 339.

¹⁵³ Gere, *Intimate Practices*, 8.

¹⁵⁴ Stacey Horstmann Gatt, "Thinking Globally, Acting Locally: The Women of the Setauket Library Club, 1896-1924," *Long Island Historical Journal* 17 no. 1 (2005): 17.

culture intellectually and socially...."¹⁵⁵ Thus, the charter members of the Zerelda Reading Club intended the club to be both an opportunity for social growth and an organization devoted to the pursuit of knowledge. Even after restructuring in January 1889, the Zerelda Reading Club held fast to its original purpose, stating that the club's object was "to promote the social and literary culture of its members."¹⁵⁶ Meetings, however, were strictly devoted to "literary improvement in such manner as shall be approved by a majority of members present."¹⁵⁷

The Zerelda Reading Club's choice of name identifies less with its educational purpose than either the Ladies' Piano Club or the Florentine Club, but at the same time offers the most intimate understanding of members' interests and motivations. The club named itself after Zerelda Wallace, a prominent Indiana woman, first president of the Indiana Women's Christian Temperance Union, and a member of the Suffrage Society of Indianapolis. Wallace was a national speaker on temperance and suffrage. Besides having heard of her activities, some of the charter members of the Zerelda Reading Club may have known Wallace personally as a result of her statewide travels on behalf of her principal interests.

Regardless of these possible personal connections, charter members evidently admired Wallace's reform activities and strong Christian faith. When Wallace died in 1901, the club remembered,

That we shall ever cherish the memory of her in honor of whom our club received its name, realizing that the name has ever been to us a source of inspiration and an incentive to think better thoughts and to do nobler deeds. Resolved, that in her death humanity has lost a friend, one whose influence was for good, whose efforts to secure justice were tireless,

¹⁵⁵ Preamble, Zerelda Reading Club Constitution, dated 1887, Zerelda Reading Club Records.

¹⁵⁶ Zerelda Reading Club Constitution, dated 1889.

¹⁵⁷ Zerelda Reading Club Constitution, dated 1889, Article 7.

whose stand for the right was unflinching. A noble woman and a Christian of strong faith whose belief was that the "fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."¹⁵⁸

In choosing to name itself after a social reformer with local significance, the Zerelda Reading Club signified its otherwise unspoken commitment to community reform.

The Ladies' Piano Club

While the Zerelda Reading Club intended to study anything and everything of interest, the Ladies' Piano Club formed for a much more limited purpose. Their object in organizing, according to the club's original constitution, was "for the purpose of mutual benefit by the study of classic writers, also for arousing greater interest in, and cultivating a taste for a higher class of music."¹⁵⁹ Charter member Nell Bare later recalled that the club intended

To hear as much of the music of the great composers as possible, to become acquainted with the chief incidents in their lives, to develop a critical judgment of the music we heard, to have stimulated in us a desire to practice, to gain freedom in playing before others, and to help encourage each other in every possible way.¹⁶⁰

From its beginnings, the club also intended to inspire non-members with their music, stating that they would give public recitals.¹⁶¹

Members of the Ladies' Piano Club chose to convey their purpose directly through their choice in name. Meeting minutes indicate that members did, in fact, have a particular devotion to the piano as their instrument of choice. Choosing to name

¹⁵⁸ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 1 April 1901.

¹⁵⁹ Ladies' Piano Club Constitution, Article 1, Ladies' Piano Club Records, Stevens Museum, Washington County Historical Society, Salem, Indiana.

¹⁶⁰ Nell Bare, "A Retrospect," 3, Ladies' Piano Club Records.

¹⁶¹ Ladies' Piano Club Constitution, Article 5, Section 3.

themselves after their favorite instrument, however, was no easy task, as charter member Nell Bare recalled a great difference of opinion concerning name choices.¹⁶²

The Florentine Club

The goals of the Florentine Club, like those of the Ladies' Piano Club, were very clear and concise. They organized specifically to study art. Rather than spelling out this interest, however, their statement of purpose closely mirrored the generic statements made by most other clubs. Their constitution stated, "The object of this society shall be the aesthetic and social culture of its members."¹⁶³ While the Florentine Club limited its study to art, it also provided members with social opportunities. Regular business meetings were to be reserved for the study of famous painters and sculptors, but club minutes note several instances when members planned separate social meetings.¹⁶⁴

Like the Ladies' Piano Club, the Florentine Club had difficulty choosing a name. For the first several meetings after they organized, minutes noted that naming was discussed and postponed, but do not divulge any other details. Finally, at the club meeting on 24 March 1900, three months after organizing, club members chose the name Florentine.

As an art club, the name Florentine conveyed an interest in Renaissance art. Naming themselves after the Italian city of Florence, the clubwomen chose a city known during the Renaissance years (roughly lasting from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century) as a center of art and culture. Many of the "Great Masters" of the era, including

¹⁶² Bare, "A Retrospect," 2-3.

¹⁶³ Florentine Club Constitution, Article 2, Section 1, Florentine Club Records; Florentine Club Minutes, 27 January 1900.

¹⁶⁴ See for example Florentine Club Minutes, 7 April 1900, 6 October 1900, 20 December 1901.

Andrea del Sarto, Pietro Perugino, Leonardo da Vinci, and Fra Bartolomeo, painted in Florence. These would be some of the same painters who would appear among the club's early study topics.¹⁶⁵

Overall, the adoption of a name provided the Florentine Club with legitimacy. Whereas the Zerelda Reading Club emerged in a decade when members of the general public largely ignored women's study clubs, by 1900 most communities embraced the emergence of new clubs as an exciting prospect. As a result, as soon as the Florentine Club chose its name, the local Lebanon newspaper announced its formation. On 29 March 1900 an announcement appeared in the *Lebanon Patriot* noting, "The Florentine Club is the latest acquisition to Lebanon's already large number of clubs. Its object is the furtherance of the interest in art. Miss Mary L. Harrison is the president of the new organization."¹⁶⁶

The women of the Zerelda Reading Club, the Ladies' Piano Club, and the Florentine Club all organized to pursue different types of study. While their statements of purpose, most likely copied from other documents, sometimes only provided a very general understanding of each club's goals, other documents including meeting minutes, club names, club histories, and newspaper accounts provide a more accurate picture of each club's unique interests.

Club Constitutions

Almost every woman's club had a constitution. Mostly generic documents devoid of personality, these constitutions were valuable to members as credentials proving a

¹⁶⁵ See for example Florentine Club Minutes, 3 November 1900.

¹⁶⁶ No title, *Lebanon Patriot*, 29 March 1900.

club's legitimacy. Because constitutions have long been the governing bodies of nations, states, and men's organizations, women's clubs created constitutions to model this accepted form of governance, and thus ensure as much respect as possible. In doing so, Martin contends that clubwomen were attempting to de-radicalize themselves and prove that they were mainstream organizations.¹⁶⁷

The constitutions of the Zerelda Reading Club, the Ladies' Piano Club, and the Florentine Club were all written in a fairly common style. The more verbose and rambling nature of the original Zerelda constitution can probably be attributed to the lack of model club constitutions in 1886. The majority of the constitutions of the three clubs discuss issues of membership. All three constitutions reveal similar procedures for admitting new members, balloting for new members, and rejecting those not unanimously approved.¹⁶⁸ The Florentine Club further restricted the balloting process by requiring members to submit candidates' names in writing and limiting name submissions only to members who had reached their one-year anniversary in the club.¹⁶⁹

Because the Zerelda Reading Club had more than double the number of members of the Florentine Club (fifteen) or the Ladies Piano Club (did not specify a number, but in early years tended to hover around ten), they broke their membership into two categories: active and non-active. Active members were required to complete assignments, whereas non-active members were not. A maximum of sixteen members were allowed in each category for a total membership of thirty-two. Perhaps because they were one of the only clubs in town, the thirty-two spots quickly filled and by April 1887 the club added a third

¹⁶⁷ Martin, *Sound of Our Own Voices*, 65.

¹⁶⁸ Zerelda Reading Club Constitution, dated 1886, Articles 1 and 11; Ladies' Piano Club Constitution, dated 1897, Article 3, Section 2; Florentine Club Constitution, dated 1900, Article 4, Section 1-6.

¹⁶⁹ Florentine Club Constitution, dated 1900, Article 4, Sections 1-6.

membership category, that of honorary member, thus increasing its membership capacity to forty-eight members.¹⁷⁰

Members of the Zerelda Reading Club and the Florentine Club paid annual dues of fifty cents. Zerelda members used this money to purchase programs, flowers for sick and deceased members, and later, to contribute to charitable endeavors. The Florentine Club spent its money mostly on program booklets. Because it was a smaller group, its dues did not stretch as far, and members were often asked to donate additional funds to pay for club socials and other activities.¹⁷¹ The Ladies' Piano Club, unlike the Zerelda Reading Club and the Florentine Club, did not charge annual dues to active members. In their second constitution, however, they added an associate category to their membership, which allowed interested parties to pay one-dollar dues annually for the privilege of attending meetings without preparing any work.¹⁷²

All three clubs took membership responsibilities seriously and instituted fines or other punishments for those failing the club. The Zerelda Reading Club fined members who were absent or tardy without proper excuse. The Ladies' Piano Club fined members twenty-five cents if they failed to bring a prepared lesson to a meeting. The Florentine Club dismissed from membership any member who missed three consecutive meetings without presenting a valid excuse. Members failing twice to complete their assignments also faced dismissal.¹⁷³

¹⁷⁰ Zerelda Reading Club Constitution, dated 1886, Article 1; Ladies' Piano Club Constitution, dated 1897, Article 1, Section 1.

¹⁷¹ Zerelda Reading Club Constitution, dated 1886, Article 5; Florentine Club Constitution, dated 1900, Article 4, Section 7.

¹⁷² Ladies' Piano Club Constitution, dated 1902, Article 1, Section 5.

¹⁷³ Zerelda Reading Club Constitution, dated 1886, Article 6; Florentine Club Constitution, dated 1900, Article 4, Section 5; Florentine Club By-Laws, Sections 4 and 5; Ladies' Piano Club By-Laws, Article 1, Section 1.

The Zerelda Reading Club, the Ladies' Piano Club, and the Florentine Club all established similar offices and duties. Officers of the Zerelda Reading Club included president, vice-president, secretary, and treasurer. Elections were held annually in December. The president presided at all club meetings, and the vice-president was responsible for taking over the president's duties when needed. The secretary recorded meeting minutes and preserved club documents. The treasurer maintained the club's money, paid expenses, and wrote an annual report of expenditures. An executive committee, appointed by the president, created the yearly club program. An additional office, titled financial secretary, was added in November 1887.¹⁷⁴

The Ladies' Piano Club elected a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, and critic, while the Florentine Club elected a president, vice-president, recording secretary, corresponding secretary, treasurer, and program committee. Neither constitution specifies the particular duties of any of the officers, but it is likely that their duties varied little from those set out by the Zerelda Reading Club. When its second constitution took effect about 1902, the Ladies' Piano Club dropped the position of critic from its officer list.¹⁷⁵

All three clubs seemed to be fairly well versed in the proper structure and order of a meeting. The Zerelda Reading Club listed its meeting order as: call to order, roll call with scriptural quotation, minutes of previous meeting, admittance of new members, proposals for membership, unfinished business, new business, exchange of books and papers, proposition for the good of the club, excuses for absence, place of meeting

¹⁷⁴ Zerelda Reading Club Constitution, dated 1886, Articles 2-4; Zerelda Reading Club By-Laws, Section 2, 4.

¹⁷⁵ Ladies' Piano Club Constitution, dated 1897, Article 2, Section 1; Ladies' Piano Club Constitution, dated 1902, Article 2, Section 1; Florentine Club Constitution, dated 1900, Article 3.

determined, secretary and treasurer reports, announce program, appoint critic, program, adjournment. The Ladies' Piano Club followed an almost identical order, although it contained fewer individual steps: roll call, secretary's report, treasurer's report, report of committees, unfinished business, new business, program, miscellaneous business, adjournment. The Florentine Club, while it did not have a written order of business, followed a similar pattern, beginning meetings with a call to order, followed by approval of minutes of the previous meeting, committee reports, vote on members, new business, art budget, program, adjournment. Thus, all three clubs followed the basic meeting order outlined in parliamentary procedure.

The Zerelda Reading Club subscribed itself to a strict observation of parliamentary procedure. While in later years, many women would publish their own parliamentary manuals especially for use by women's clubs, in the 1880s, these resources were not available. Most likely, then, Zerelda members would have followed a more general parliamentary manual like the highly popular book written by Henry Robert, *Pocket Manual of Rules of Order for Deliberative Assemblies*, later known as *Robert's Rules of Order*. Robert had been publishing his manual since 1876.¹⁷⁶ While none of this is particularly surprising, the similarity in club officers and meeting order perhaps best explains each club's desire to be considered a viable women's organization beyond the confines of their particular community.

¹⁷⁶ Zerelda Reading Club Constitution, dated 1886, Article 3.

The Zerelda Reading Club Incorporates

In January 1889, the Zerelda Reading Club took an unusual step when it voted to incorporate with the Indiana Secretary of State. There was limited precedent for the incorporation of literary clubs, although it was allowed by state constitutions.¹⁷⁷ Incorporation was more often undertaken by charitable societies, who needed legal protection to collect and distribute funds or own and operate a building without fear that these assets would be claimed by their husbands as their own.

In the only article found to date on this topic, Bruce A. Campbell provides a few insights on the motivations of a voluntary association to incorporate. Campbell notes,

Corporate charters were mutually advantageous for both government and voluntary associations. From the standpoint of the state, an association was chartered to facilitate the voluntary formation and operation of a socially beneficial institution. A charter not only signaled a measure of official approval, but also granted relative permanence, organizational structure, legal capacity to take, hold, and manage property, and authority over persons and activities within the range of corporate activities. A charter was a semi-permanent organizational constitution, creating, enabling, structuring, and limiting, making each corporation, in Blackstone's felicitous metaphor, a "little republic."¹⁷⁸

Thus, an organization that incorporated gained the ability to operate much the same as a business corporation.

The vast majority of women's study clubs do not appear to have incorporated. The few that did were motivated by a desire to build a clubhouse. Only Theodora Martin mentions incorporation in her history, but confines her discussion to the formation of stock companies for the purchase of a clubhouse. Martin notes that women throughout the country seeking to construct a woman's building often began their endeavor with "the

¹⁷⁷ To date, I have not found a source that discusses another women's study club that incorporated excepting those that did so to procure a clubhouse or building for charitable work.

¹⁷⁸ Bruce A. Campbell, "Social Federalism: The Constitutional Position of Nonprofit Corporations in Nineteenth-Century America," *Law & History Review* 8 (Autumn 1990): 151-52.

bold act of forming a stock company composed only of women." This endeavor "brought women into the public domain decorously in the most natural way – through building a home."¹⁷⁹

If some other group influenced the Zerelda Reading Club's decision, perhaps the only logical example that they could have followed was the lady stockholders of the Indianapolis Propylaeum. When organized in 1888, the Indianapolis Propylaeum became the first women's stock company in Indiana to finance the construction of a woman's building solely through the contributions of women shareholders. Few women's groups in the country had taken this step at the time.

The Indianapolis Woman's Club was largely responsible for supporting the initial plans for the Indianapolis Propylaeum. The Indianapolis Women's Club had organized in 1875 at the home of Mrs. Martha McKay of 135 Ash Street, Indianapolis. The purpose of the club was "To form an organized center for the mental and social culture of its members and for the improvement of domestic life."¹⁸⁰

Because of its large and growing membership, the Indianapolis Women's Club desperately needed a meeting place of its own. In 1887, one of the club's leaders, May Wright Sewall, created a plan to build a clubhouse, inspired by a women's clubhouse in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She eventually determined that the best plan would be to sell stock to women irrelevant of their membership in any particular club, build a woman's building that was centrally located, and rent space in the building to women's clubs.¹⁸¹

While the six women who met with Sewall were all members of the Indianapolis

¹⁷⁹ Martin, *Sound of Our Own Voices*, 68.

¹⁸⁰ Caroline Dunn, *Indianapolis Propylaeum: A History of the Indianapolis Propylaeum* (Indianapolis: privately printed, 1938), 1-2.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 3.

Women's Club, from its beginnings the stock company was organized as a nonpartisan corporation, and invited women from all local clubs to purchase stock and rent space.¹⁸²

Officially incorporated on 6 June 1888, The Indianapolis Propylaeum began with a capital stock of \$15,000. Seven women signed the Articles of Association as incorporators: May Wright Sewall, Elizabeth Pierce, Margaret Chislett, Helen Holman, Mary Walcott, Harriett Foster, and Carrie Milligan. The Articles of Association stated that only women could purchase stock. Shares of stock sold for twenty-five dollars each and could be purchased on installment. Attorneys Charles W. Fairbanks, H.J. Milligan, H.D. Pierce, and J.A. Holman, all husbands of incorporators or charter members of the Propylaeum, assisted the women in the paperwork.¹⁸³

The Zerelda Reading Club had very likely heard of the actions of the Indianapolis Propylaeum when its members began to consider the feasibility of incorporating. What remains unclear, however, is the motivation behind the club's decision to incorporate. As far as is known, they did not have serious plans to purchase a clubhouse and did not have any great amount of money in their treasury to protect. Club minutes provide few additional clues, noting that Victoria Beck Moon made the suggestion to incorporate on 30 January 1889, and "made a few remarks setting forth the advantages to be derived from being an incorporated body."¹⁸⁴

¹⁸² On March 19, 1902 the *New York Evening Telegram* reported that Milwaukee's clubhouse was the first women's building constructed in the United States, with other buildings following until twenty clubs throughout the country had erected clubhouses. The Indianapolis Propylaeum is mentioned as appearing four years after the Milwaukee building (clippings file, Indianapolis Propylaeum Collection, Indiana Historical Society, Box 10, Folder 14). Indianapolis papers commented on the originality of the Propylaeum in "20th Anniversary of the Propylaeum: One of the First Buildings of its Kind in the Country," *Indianapolis News*, 9 May 1908, p.15, c.1. See also Dunn, *Indianapolis Propylaeum*, 13-15.

¹⁸³ Certificate of Incorporation and Articles of Association of the Indianapolis Propylaeum, 2, Indianapolis Propylaeum Records, Indiana Historical Society, Box 10, Folder 1.

¹⁸⁴ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 30 January 1889.

Could they have been planning grand endeavors that required a state charter, but that never materialized? Or, was the desire to incorporate simply an example of their desire to follow legal formalities? It is impossible to know the answer to this question, but available records do indicate an overall attitude of formality on the part of club structure. Besides the frequency with which they updated their constitution, club members also spoke to members of the newly formed Clio Club about the importance of following legal procedure. At the organizational meeting of the Clio Club in February 1888, Jennie Ripple stated, "no organization is complete without some systematic form or discipline of government."¹⁸⁵

State law of Indiana, like that of other states, did not mandate that voluntary associations file articles of incorporation. It did, however, allow associations to do so if they wished. The Zerelda Reading Club filed its Articles of Incorporation under the 1887 Indiana Act that read, "any number of persons may voluntarily associate themselves by written articles, to be signed by each person who may be a member at the time of organization, specifying the objects of the same, the corporate name they may adopt; to designate such objects pursuant to this act."¹⁸⁶

For those organizations wishing to incorporate, Indiana law provided a few protections, similar to those discussed by Campbell, including

all the rights, powers, and privileges given to corporations by common law; to sue and be sued; to borrow money and secure the payment of the same by notes and mortgages, bonds or deeds of trust upon their personal and real property, and rent, lease, purchase, hold, sell, and convey such real and personal property as may be necessary and proper for the purpose

¹⁸⁵ Clio Club Minutes, 20 February 1888, Clio Club Records, Old Jail Museum, Kosciusko County Historical Society, Warsaw, Indiana.

¹⁸⁶ *Laws of Indiana* (1887), Chapter XXVI, Section 1, pp. 41-42.

of erecting buildings and for other proper objects of any such corporation.¹⁸⁷

Deciding to incorporate may have been Victoria Moon's idea, but carrying out the plan required professional assistance. The Zerelda members turned to their fathers and husbands for help. After the motion to incorporate passed, Trella Brubaker's father, attorney A. G. Wood, came to the 6 February 1889 club meeting to help the club with their plans to incorporate. Wood "explained to members the necessary steps to be taken in order to procure a charter." Stockholders were solicited among current members, and twenty-three members purchased stock. Later, Regina Bowser's husband, Francis, notarized their completed charter.¹⁸⁸

The Articles of Incorporation filed on 19 February 1889, included lofty goals that had not previously been discussed at club meetings. The articles stated, "The object of the formation of said corporation is for a more general improvement in literature and science and for the establishment of a private literary library and the maintaining of a reading room, and to contract, and to transact all business incident thereto."¹⁸⁹ Available records do not indicate that Zerelda members ever took advantage of their newly acquired corporate status, or that they made any attempt to follow through with the literary library or reading room. For a few years after the Articles of Incorporation were filed, club minutes note that an annual meeting of stockholders was held, but never mention what type of business they conducted at these meetings. Articles of Dissolution were never filed, and it appears that they simply let their charter lapse.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., Chapter XXVI, Section 3, pp. 43-44.

¹⁸⁸ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 6 February 1889; Articles of Incorporation of the Zerelda Reading Club, filed 19 February 1889, Indiana State Archives.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid.

Summary

The Zerelda Reading Club, Ladies' Piano Club, and Florentine Club had many resources available to them when choosing names, creating their statements of purpose, constitutions, and by-laws. These included examples from clubs that had organized earlier, manuals of parliamentary procedure, and resources available through the General Federation of Women's Clubs. While the exact combination of resources that each club used remains unknown, the similarity in their organizational documents suggests that all three utilized some type of model.

Organizational documents served the three clubs well, but as each club grew and developed, changes became necessary. Over the years, each club tailored their rules to suit their circumstances. The Zerelda Reading Club, for example, presumably having trouble with attendance, decided to add a rule that a non-active member who missed twelve consecutive meetings would be dropped from the roll. As mentioned in Chapter 1, members also decided that they would no longer accept new members under the age of sixteen after Zerelda children as young as ten sought admittance to the club.¹⁹⁰

The Ladies' Piano Club did not write its first constitution until it became necessary. They drew up their constitution in January 1897. When the club drafted its second constitution in 1900, it made a number of necessary changes to allow for more productive club meetings. These included a twenty-five cent fine for members without good excuse for failing to complete assigned work and a dedicated order of business to be followed.¹⁹¹

¹⁹⁰ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 12 October 1891, 13 August 1890.

¹⁹¹ Ladies' Piano Club Minutes, 3 January 1900.

The Florentine Club revised its constitution for similar reasons. Fearing the effect that excessive tardiness would have on their productivity, they instituted a five cent fine for those who arrived late without a proper excuse. Later, they became more strict, requiring this fine of all members who arrived after 2:30 PM. Due to monetary problems, they also added a fifty-cent initiation fee.¹⁹²

As the clubs evolved, individual experiences resulted in decisions to revise organizational documents in order to better suit the needs of each club. Members' dedication to these written rules, however, remained steadfast throughout the years, as they provided clubs with legitimacy and structure.

¹⁹² Florentine Club Minutes, 21 April, 15 September, 3 November 1900.

CHAPTER 3: STUDY ACTIVITY

National histories of women's clubs have identified a number of common themes in club study. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, women wishing to pursue an activity outside the home had a plethora of opportunities. Temperance work, sewing circles, relief societies, and a variety of other charitable and church-sponsored organizations began to recruit female members. More radical women might pursue membership in a suffrage club. The heyday of women's study club activity emerged at a time when a number of women were considering opportunities available to them outside of child rearing and homemaking. They sought to expand their horizons beyond the traditional domestic ideology associated with the Victorian Era. Women who chose to join a study club believed that knowledge of the arts would increase their worth as ladies, even though traditional Victorian values did not expect, or necessarily want, women to be highly educated. At the same time, fathers and husbands expected their wives and daughters to master the arts at a sufficient level to be considered accomplished, but not become so skilled as to be considered professional. Study clubs offered a covert opportunity for a wide variety of educational endeavors.¹⁹³

Most clubwomen studied a variety of annually selected topics from the fields of literature, history, mythology, scripture, and geography. Lessons in the art, music, literature, politics, and history of a particular country also frequently appeared in club programs. Karen Blair notes that common choices in literature included William

¹⁹³ Karen Blair, *The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914* (New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1980), 57; Anne Ruggles Gere, *Intimate Practices: Literacy and Cultural Work in U.S. Women's Clubs, 1880-1920* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 34-51; Karen Blair, *The Torchbearers: Women and their Amateur Arts Associations in America, 1890-1930* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), 2-3.

Shakespeare, Dante, and Elizabeth Barrett Browning, while more contemporary topics like socialism, the Russian Czar, or the problems of Native Americans also made their way into club programs. These topics tended to be far from controversial, and many clubs banned more provocative subjects, or at least relegated them to the debate portion of the meeting. Anne Gere notes, for example, that few organizations made room for the theories of Sigmund Freud or Charles Darwin in their programs.¹⁹⁴ Overall, the effect of educational endeavors on clubwomen is best summarized by Gere:

By assigning reading on specific topics, creating libraries, offering book reviews in their publications, requiring members to write papers as well as club histories, minutes, and a variety of other documents, women's clubs pushed members to become more insightful readers and better writers.¹⁹⁵

Other clubs devoted their attention to a particular line of inquiry. Music clubs and art clubs became increasingly popular at the end of the nineteenth century. Karen Blair observes that both types of clubs tended to create programs that relied heavily on topics related to European masters of music and art.¹⁹⁶

The vast majority of clubs modeled their educational activities after school and college curricula. Most filled their meetings with short papers written by members on a variety of subjects. Few programs left room for discussions after a paper had been read. Clubs frequently scheduled debates because the women believed them to increase members' ability to think logically. Illogical thinking was commonly thought to be

¹⁹⁴ Blair, *Clubwoman as Feminist*, 57-58; Anne Firor Scott, *Natural Allies: Women's Associations in American History* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 115; Gere, *Intimate Practices*, 34-35, 47.

¹⁹⁵ Gere, *Intimate Practices*, 34-35.

¹⁹⁶ Blair, *Torchbearers*, 47, 76.

among women's shortcomings. Clubwomen frequently supplemented meetings with music, dramatic productions, and consideration of current events.¹⁹⁷

Study clubs did not confine all meetings to strict study, and historians have noted that special programs, like guest days, gentlemen's evenings, and anniversary parties appeared in minutes a few times per year.¹⁹⁸ Historians have been less successful in determining the seriousness with which study activity was undertaken. Karen Blair and Anne Gere both touch on this subject, but their discussions are largely anecdotal. Blair notes that women's clubs were occasionally criticized for the lack of quality of their educational endeavors, quoting an admission from an unnamed clubwoman: "There is still truth to the satirical remark that the subject of conversation at our teas is, 'first Shelley, then Charley, then Mary Ann.'"¹⁹⁹ Gere's anecdote appears at the beginning of her first chapter, titled "Literacy and Intimacy." She does not provide a discussion of the significance of the statement. She quotes Zellie Emerson, a member of the Friday Club of Jackson, Michigan, who in 1889 said, "I confess to having been more interested in the sight of the dear, familiar, new-old faces, than at first in the reading, and to have paid very little attention to the selection from Lubbock, read by Mrs. Root."²⁰⁰

Other historians have discovered statements that refute the remarks of Zellie and the unnamed clubwoman. Theodora Penny Martin quotes a member of the Chicago Women's Club, who once observed, "there is little social life in the club."²⁰¹ Martin notes that the Chicago Women's Club members were serious students and avoided frivolous

¹⁹⁷ Theodora Penny Martin, *The Sound of Our Own Voices: Women's Study Clubs, 1860-1910* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987), 68, 93, 97; Gere, *Intimate Practices*, 34-35; Blair, *Clubwoman as Feminist*, 57-58.

¹⁹⁸ Martin, *Sound of Our Own Voices*, 111-12.

¹⁹⁹ Blair, *Clubwoman as Feminist*, 71.

²⁰⁰ Gere, *Intimate Practices*, 17.

²⁰¹ Martin, *Sound of Our Own Voices*, 111.

uses of their time at club meetings. If anything, then, can be ascertained from these anecdotes, it is that individual clubs and members held themselves to different standards of scholarly pursuit and that few generalization can be applied.

Chapters 1 and 2 have demonstrated that small town Indiana clubwomen both modeled their clubs after extant clubs elsewhere and created entities that fulfilled the individual needs of their associates. To what extent, then, did Indiana women's study clubs follow the recommendations of other associations when choosing what to study? Did clubwomen follow the generic topics of history, literature, art, and music so popularly laid out by earlier clubs, or did they pick study topics of particular importance to their immediate surroundings? What pattern emerged in the selection of topics, and did this change or evolve through the years? Not only will an examination of the practices of study and choice of topics of the three clubs under consideration shed light on the interests of Indiana women, but it will also indicate their definition of culture.

Zerelda Reading Club

Of the three clubs, the Zerelda Reading Club had the widest variety of interests. Like the clubs studied in previous histories, between 1886 and 1910 the Zerelda Reading Club discussed history, geography, literature, art, music, and other cultures. Records indicate that most commonly, members devoted an entire club year to one particular subject. This was not a steadfast rule, however, and on occasion they took up more than one type of study in a year. Current events or topics of debate also made their way quite randomly into meeting minutes.

The Zerelda Reading Club assembled for meetings once per week. While topics varied from day to day, a few elements of study accompanied most gatherings. Many meetings began with scripture. Members responded to roll call with a quotation from the Bible. Prior to 1900, minutes often note that the club read selections from the *Women's Journal* and the *Boston Journal*. Finally, either instrumental or vocal music often accompanied the program.²⁰²

At each club meeting, one critic presided. This person was charged with commenting on the work presented by other members. While meeting minutes do not discuss the contents of most critics' reports, they do reveal that critics notated mispronounced words. Members kept track of mispronunciations and held a contest at the end of the club year to determine who learned the most.²⁰³ More commonly, minutes note that the critics found nothing to correct. Such comments likely illustrate that the Zerelda Reading Club considered its minutes to be an open record and was therefore anxious to keep accounts of members' shortcomings out of the public eye.²⁰⁴

A brief summary of the work conducted in club years between 1886 and 1910 illustrates the wide variety of topics studied. The Zerelda Reading Club devoted the club year from the fall of 1888 to the winter of 1889 to literature. In the fall, the club studied the work of William Shakespeare. For example, on 26 December 1888 they discussed *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. January through May was devoted to Dante. The club first studied his life and then studied cantos of his *Inferno*.²⁰⁵ Both Shakespeare and Dante

²⁰² Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 4 April 1888, 17 July 1889, 24 July 1889, 12 February 1890, 16 September 1895, 8 February 1898, 4 December 1899, 17 November 1902, Zerelda Club Records, Old Jail Museum, Kosciusko County Historical Society, Warsaw, Indiana.

²⁰³ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 19 September 1898.

²⁰⁴ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 17 November 1902, 1 April 1907.

²⁰⁵ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, January-May 1889.

have long been considered literary classics, as noted by Karen Blair, and as a result would have been common choices on any club's reading list.

The club devoted the year from the fall of 1893 to the spring of 1894 to history. In the fall, the women studied ancient civilizations, including India, China, Egypt, and Greece.²⁰⁶ In the spring, club members continued their historical studies, moving from ancient history to modern history. They discussed important early American statesmen, including Thomas Jefferson and Daniel Webster. In May, they discussed the origins of the states' names and mottoes. Throughout the year, the Zerelda Reading Club also considered a number of unrelated topics, including German musicians and Indiana authors.²⁰⁷

In the fall of 1898, the club again studied history. Members must have enjoyed their short study of Ancient Greece in October 1893, because they devoted almost the entire fall of 1898 to further study. On September 19, the club discussed Homer's life and work. Homer lived between the 12th and 8th centuries BC. and wrote the classic epic poems of Greek history, the *Illiad* and the *Odyssey*. On September 12, the women studied the causes of the Trojan War, a conflict between Greece and Troy around 1200 BC. On December 12, they studied physical education of the Greeks. During this time, they also interspersed discussions of the United States government. Because Ancient Greece had one of the earliest forms of democracy, the program committee may have felt that these contemporary political studies were well placed in the calendar year.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁶ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 18 September 1893, 25 September 1893, 2 October 1893, 9 October 1893.

²⁰⁷ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 8 January 1893, 23 April 1893, 14 May 1893, 19 February 1893, 26 February 1893.

²⁰⁸ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 12 September 1898, 19 September 1898, 12 December 1898.

The 1906-1907 club year focused on other cultures/geography. Topics included a variety of places, including the seven wonders of America, gorges and waterfalls of Norway, and the city of Stockholm. Members also studied Swedish culture, including Swedish newspapers and health and pleasure in Sweden.²⁰⁹

Finally, in the fall of 1909, the club studied a combination of European cultures, history and art. On September 22, the clubwomen discussed Dublin, Ireland, specifically its Phoenix Park, Trinity College, and Irish song. On November 15, members focused on Rome, including its cathedrals, churches, and art treasures. One member had recently visited Rome and discussed several of her favorite works of art, including "The Nile God," Michelangelo's "Moses," the Sistine Chapel, particularly its "The Last Judgment," and the work of Raphael. On October 18, the club discussed Holland, specifically "the pride of Amsterdam," Dutch art and artists, the Dutch housewife, and Queen Wilhelmina.²¹⁰

While the Zerelda Reading Club most commonly dedicated a year to a particular area of study, it also interspersed topics of immediate importance. Discussions of events and problems impacting the daily lives of members appeared in minute books a few times per year. These discussions offer an opportunity to learn how the Zerelda women used study sessions to cope with their environments. For example, on 5 October 1896, the club debated, "Resolved: that it is an economic crisis for Warsaw women to shop in other cities." What prompted this interest in the local economy? Was Warsaw experiencing a depression or other economic setback? A survey of newspaper articles reported around the time of the meeting notes no immediate cause for concern among the clubwomen

²⁰⁹ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 10 December 1906, 17 December 1906, 4 February 1907, 25 March 1907, 1 April 1907.

²¹⁰ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 22 September 1909, 18 October 1909, 15 November 1909.

over the welfare of local business. In fact, business among Warsaw's local shops at the time appears to have been booming. By 1896, the town supported three men's clothing stores: Phillipson's, the Globe, and Charlie Nye's American Clothing. It also had several drug stores, grocery stores, and hardware stores.²¹¹ Furthermore, the shops in the town appear to have had plenty of business. When the new Marshall and Kingery Dry Goods Store opened in April 1896, the *Northern Indianian* noted that the store had an enormous amount of business on its opening day. On 8 October 1896, the *Northern Indianian* reported that Mr. J.S. Shield celebrated the second anniversary of his store, which drew crowds of local residents and people from surrounding counties.²¹²

While retail stores in the city appear to have been doing well, manufacturing industries in Warsaw had hit a slump. On 27 August 1896 the *Northern Indianian* reported that the local Lesh Manufacturing Company was shutting its operations until after the election, due to "the ill-effects of the agitation of unlimited coinage."²¹³ Perhaps this bit of news is the key to the club's concern over local economics. This "agitation of unlimited coinage" had its most immediate origins in the panic of 1893, a national depression that affected big and small businessmen alike. Clifton J. Phillips, a noted Indiana historian, asserts, "The ensuing depression had a severe effect upon Indiana, causing an extraordinary number of factory closings, railroad bankruptcies, and bank suspensions."²¹⁴ In addition, falling farm prices and widespread unemployment affected other residents of the state. In 1894, the widespread circulation of William H. Harvey's

²¹¹ Michelle J. Bormet, *A History of the City of Warsaw, Indiana: Preserving the Past for the Future* (Bourbon, Indiana: Harmony Marketing Group, 2001), 28, 30-31.

²¹² "Second Anniversary," *Northern Indianian*, 8 October 1896; "The New Store," *Northern Indianian*, 2 April 1896.

²¹³ "Employees Laid Off," *Northern Indianian*, 27 August 1896.

²¹⁴ Clifton J. Phillips, *Indiana in Transition: The Emergence of an Industrial Commonwealth, 1880-1920* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society and Indiana Historical Bureau, 1968), 38.

pamphlet, *Coin's Financial School*, convinced many Hoosiers that the country's economic depression had been caused by the federal government's decision to halt the use of silver as a form of money. They favored a return to unrestricted coinage. Debate over the coinage of silver came to a climax in the 1896 presidential election, and in the months preceding the election, there was much concern over the future of the economy. The women of the Zerelda Reading Club would have had plenty of reason to discuss how they might assist their city amidst an uncertain economic future. As noted in Chapter One, the ranks of membership included the wives and daughters of a great number of Warsaw businessmen. In all, husbands and fathers included three grocers, two dry goods salesmen, two general merchants, one clerk at the Globe clothing store, one druggist, and one hardware merchant.²¹⁵

On 12 December 1898 the women studied exercise in relation to health, mental life, and morals. Traditional Victorian notions of medical science held that the fragility of women's bodies argued against their undertaking strenuous physical activity. Coupled with expectations of ladylike behavior, notions of fragility led most women of status to spend their days in sedentary pursuits, such as reading, visiting, or playing a musical instrument. Beginning in the last years of the nineteenth century, however, new ideas about women's health resulted in the cautious recommendation that women engage in some amount of light activity. By the 1890s, many girls' schools and colleges offered supervised exercise and some sports.²¹⁶ Those who championed physical activity for women believed that it brought them strength and confidence. Feminists were apt to

²¹⁵ Phillips, *Indiana in Transition*, 40, 46. See also Appendix.

²¹⁶ Martha H. Verbrugge, "Knowledge and Power: Health and Physical Education for Women in America" in *Women, Health and Medicine in America: A Historical Handbook*, ed. Rima D. Apple (New York: Garland Publishing Co., 1990), 374-5, 377, 380; Mabel Lee, *A History of Physical Education and Sports in the U.S.A.* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1983), 68, 76.

promote physical activity as a method of independence, chiefly in gaining control over their bodies. Whatever the reason, women of the late Victorian Era who chose to exercise indeed benefited from better health and stamina. By choosing to study this topic, the Zerelda women not only showed concern for methods that might improve their own health, but possibly also debated the actual impact that physical activity would have on their daily lives, or the propriety of taking up this pastime.²¹⁷

On 14 June 1899, the Zerelda Reading Club studied the compulsory education law of Indiana. This law had its roots in 1873, when the state legislature first began to explore the idea of mandated education. Republicans supported the plan whereas Democrats tended to oppose it, believing that parents should have the sole authority over matters of education. Because of bitter public opposition, the compulsory education law did not pass until 1897. Indiana's first compulsory education law, enacted 8 March 1897, required all children between the ages of eight and fourteen to attend public, private, or parochial school for twelve weeks a year. The law also provided for truant officers and authorized local governments to levy additional taxes to pay for the costs of public schooling. When the Zerelda Reading Club chose to discuss the topic two years later, they were likely concerned with how it affected their children.²¹⁸

On 4 February 1901, the club considered, "does a person's capability of enjoying life increase with civilization?" Certainly, the clubwomen had seen many changes in their lifetimes that may have prompted this discussion. During the nineteenth century the country experienced fast-paced industrial growth, the opening of many factories, and a

²¹⁷ Verbrugge, "Knowledge and Power," 376.

²¹⁸ Justin E. Walsh, *The Centennial History of the Indiana General Assembly, 1816-1978* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1987), 249, 393; *Laws of Indiana* (1897), Chapter CLXV, 248-50; Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 14 June 1899.

shift from rural to urban living. Beginning in the 1880s and extending into the 1900s, the town of Warsaw had experienced many changes that would have directly impacted members, mostly related to technological advances. In 1880, the first gas street lights were installed, and in 1897 new electric lighting replaced these. In 1882, the first telephone lines were installed, and in 1886, the Winona Electric, Light, and Water Company, which provided the first utilities to the city, incorporated. Additionally, throughout the last decades of the nineteenth century, numerous small stores and factories opened in the city. For example, in 1895, DePuy Manufacturers opened to produce wire mesh and wooden splints.²¹⁹ With such changes occurring all around them, the women of the Zerelda Reading Club obviously had some doubts about the benefits of urbanization and industrial growth.

Overall, the majority of members appear to have been devoted to study activity. Still, the club experienced an occasional lapse in interest, especially in the years prior to 1900. On 4 July 1888, for example, minutes note that members present discussed ways to keep up interest in the club. On that particular date, only three women had come to the scheduled meeting, whereas their total enrollment consisted of approximately forty-four women. Meetings over the past few months had usually yielded around ten to fifteen members present. About ten years later, in 1899, the club was still experiencing periodic difficulties retaining interest in study work. Twice, meeting minutes note that members did not participate at meetings. On 3 April 1899, "The president made some remarks upon the conduct of the club during its session and begged that this be remedied in the future." Again, on 18 September 1899, during a lesson in geography, minutes note,

²¹⁹ Bormet, *A History of the City of Warsaw*, 2, 25-27, 30; Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 4 February 1901.

"Miss Thayer was well prepared to make the lesson both interesting and instructive, but much to the annoyance of the president and some of the good pupils, not much satisfaction was derived from Miss Thayer's effort."²²⁰

The Zerelda Reading Club studied a wide variety of national and international subjects in an attempt to become better educated, but always retained a more immediate interest in understanding events and problems of local importance. For the most part, study activity remained a serious endeavor, although occasional lapses in interest did occur.

Ladies' Piano Club

Unlike the Zerelda Reading Club, the Ladies' Piano Club devoted itself solely to one topic: music. From year to year, the club studied a combination of harmony, composers' music, and composers' lives. In their earliest years, the Ladies' Piano Club mostly studied the lives of one or two composers and played several songs in one meeting, although in some years programs did not include biography. The women mostly studied European music. After 1900, the club also formed a chorus, and began to include violin and vocal music in the schedule. As the years progressed, club programs became more varied, relied less on biography, and incorporated music beyond European classics. Like the Zerelda Reading Club, the Ladies' Piano Club began most meetings with responses to roll call. These responses almost always reflected their musical interests, and varied from opera to general music items of interest. On one occasion in 1907, minutes note that roll call was responded to, not with musical information, but

²²⁰ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 4 July 1888, 3 April 1899, 18 September 1899.

instead with a current event.²²¹ Overall, club member Nell Bare remembered that, "We worked along in regular meetings, having selections played from whoever and whatever we pleased, and papers written regarding the lives of composers, but all misc., hotch potch or what you like."²²²

In the club year from the fall of 1896 to the spring of 1897, the Ladies' Piano Club combined the study of composers and harmony with a variety of musical selections. On October 1, for example, the club studied the life of George Frederic Handel (German/English, 1685-1759) and Ignacy Jan Paderewski (Polish, 1860-1941), then played musical selections including "Die Muhle" by Rafael Joseffy (1852-1915) and "Beautiful Spring Reverie" by Richard Goerdelier (unk.). On November 12, the club studied the lives of Carl Maria von Weber (German, 1786-1826) and Franz Schubert (Austrian, 1794-1828), followed by musical selections from Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (Austrian, 1756-1791) and others. On December 3, Mrs. Ramsey reported that she could not find any information on the life of Peter Erasmus Lange-Muller (Danish, 1850-1926), so the club only studied Anton Rubenstein (Russian, 1829-1894) and played several musical selections. Study books on harmony were distributed to those present, and in future meetings would become a topic of study. On 14 January 1897 the first lesson in harmony was given: the formation of major and minor scales. The club also studied the life of Mozart and played musical selections. On March 18, the club discussed musical chords, along with the lives of Richard Wagner (German, 1813-1883) and Philipp Scharwenka (German, 1847-1917). Members had intended to hold their last meeting of

²²¹ For examples, see Ladies' Piano Club Minutes, 11 October 1898, 1 December 1898, 28 October 1902, 18 November 1902, 5 May 1903, 20 November 1903, 17 November 1904, 9 December 1904, 16 April 1907, Ladies' Piano Club Records, Stevens Museum, Washington County Historical Society, Salem, Indiana.

²²² Nell Bare, "A Retrospect," no date, Ladies' Piano Club Records.

the year on June 10, but on May 20 minutes noted that the women had decided to continue to meet once per month in the summer to conduct harmony lessons and play musical selections.²²³ Thus, in their first year of existence, the Ladies' Piano Club undertook a vast amount of work, and studied a wide variety of European composers.

During 1899-1900, the club continued to pair musical selections with sketches of composers' lives. They had, however, discontinued harmony lessons, perhaps because members felt they had become proficient in their piano playing or perhaps due to a lack of interest in the tedious work of musical theory. Club members may have indeed tired of study, as a number of meetings were devoted only to musical selections. January 9, April 12, April 27, and May 15, for example, only featured piano music and solos. Other meetings featured the familiar combination of biography and music. On December 5, the club again learned about Carl Maria von Weber followed by musical selections. On January 30, they repeated their study of Ignacy Jan Paderewski, and on February 20, discussed John Philip Sousa (American, 1854-1932). Both sessions were accompanied by music.²²⁴

Not every program in the fall of 1903 included study and music. In the month of October, the club's programs consisted only of musical selections, perhaps allowing members time to acquire materials to write their papers. Selections included music from Chopin, Mendelssohn, Mozart, and Garotte. In November and December, the club again

²²³ Ladies' Piano Club Minutes, 1 October 1896, 12 November 1896, 3 December 1896, 14 January 1897, 18 March 1897, 10 June 1897.

²²⁴ Ladies' Piano Club Minutes, 5 December 1899, 9 January 1900, 30 January 1900, 20 February 1900, 12 April 1900, 27 April 1900, 15 May 1900.

began study activity along with their musical selections. Topics included the rise of sacred drama and the growth of polyphony.²²⁵

In 1905-1906, the club again adapted its activities. Either the women had tired of biography or had run out of composers to discuss. Instead, the club had mostly turned to musical performances with an occasional addition on a paper of interest. Musical selections included sacred music, German music, folk music, American folk song, and staples like Johannes Brahms (German, 1833-1897), Robert Schumann (German, 1810-1856), and Franz Schubert (Austrian, 1797-1828). December 7 and 28 featured the only biography of the year, sketches of the lives of Stephen C. Foster (American, 1826-1864) and Cecile Chaminade (French, 1857-1944), a rare example of a female musician on the agenda.²²⁶ Papers included the influence of folk song on classical music, musical periodicals, and the history of sacred music.²²⁷

The 1909-1910 club year featured yet another shift in activity. Instead of creating its own program, as members of the program committee had done for the past fourteen years, the club utilized suggestions from a published book on study topics for music clubs. They relied on *Music Club Programs From All Nations*, first published by Arthur Elson in 1907. Elson's book provided a short history of musical development in each country under consideration. It also provided biographical sketches of leading composers. At the end of each chapter, questions based on the reading were provided. These questions were not particularly thought provoking, but rather required straightforward answers much like what would be found on a quiz. Questions that the

²²⁵ Ladies' Piano Club Minutes, 9 October 1903, 30 October 1903, 20 November 1903, 11 December 1903.

²²⁶ Ladies' Piano Club Minutes, 5 October 1905, 26 October 1905, 16 November 1905, 7 December 1905, 28 December 1905, 1 March 1906, 22 March 1906.

²²⁷ Ladies' Piano Club Minutes, 5 October 1905, 16 November 1905, 18 January 1906.

Ladies' Piano Club included in their programs were, "what Englishman invented a system of measured rotation?" (England); what composer was killed by a bicycle accident and what was his most important work?" (France); and how did the syllables of the scale originate and who first used them?" (Italy). The book also provided suggestions for violin, piano, and vocal solos, arranged by three levels of skill.²²⁸

Minutes note that the Ladies' Piano Club intended to study portions of Elson's book for a number of years. It focused its first year of study on the book's chapters on French, Italian, German, and English music. Members devoted two evenings to each country, examining each chapter's questions and choosing selections from Elson's list of music. The club also occasionally presented a paper in conjunction with the program, although it was not clear whether papers drew solely from Elson's history or if the women utilized other sources in preparing them.²²⁹

In choosing musical selections for the program, the Ladies' Piano Club utilized Elson's recommendations based on level of skill. Since members had a variety of musical aptitudes, selections included piano, violin, and vocal numbers for various skill levels. Easy selections included A. Scarlatti's "Consolation" and "Pastorale," and Tosti's "Beauty's Eyes." Medium difficulty included Felix Mendelssohn's "Gondellied" and Julius Benedict's "Romance in D Major." An occasional difficult musical selection also appeared, such as Schubert's "The Wanderer."²³⁰

Unlike the Zerelda Reading Club, the Ladies' Piano Club appears to have had a much more difficult time securing dedicated members and keeping up interest in its work. This was especially true in the first year of the club's existence, but problems continued

²²⁸ Arthur Elson, *Music Club Programs From All Nations* (Boston: Oliver Ditson Co., 1907).

²²⁹ Ladies' Piano Club Minutes, October, 1909-March, 1910.

²³⁰ Ibid.; Elson, *Music Club Programs From All Nations*, 17, 31, 62, 76.

throughout the next decade. On at least four occasions in 1897, minutes note that the number of absences affected attempts to carry out the scheduled program. On July 8, insufficient members were present to elect officers, and no program was given. Again, on September 9, the members who were supposed to present the work on the program were not present, so the club adjourned without taking up the evening's study. Similar situations occurred on October 21 and December 3.²³¹ In later years, occasional instances also arose when the number of absentees necessitated shortening or eliminating the club's program.²³²

While the Ladies' Piano Club remained solely devoted to music between 1896 and 1910, members incorporated many different types of musical study in their programs. Unlike the Zerelda Reading Club, they did not use club meetings to discuss local events or items of present-day concern. The club was much more interested in self-culture and cultivation of musical ability. Perhaps because of this lack of interest in more immediate concerns, the Ladies' Piano Club had difficulty attracting dedicated members, as early meetings often note that programs had to be cut short because the members who were supposed to prepare the evening's program did not attend the meeting.

Florentine Club

Like the Ladies' Piano Club, the Florentine Club studied a limited variety of topics. Members devoted their attention to art. They studied art forms, biography and works of specific artists, and architecture. At the same time, they sometimes interspersed unrelated topics into their programs.

²³¹ Ladies' Piano Club Minutes, 8 July 1897, 9 September 1897, 21 October 1897, 3 December 1897.

²³² For examples, see minutes 14 March 1899, 9 January 1900, 28 December 1905.

In the spring of 1900, the club's first topics of study fittingly included the lives and work of Michaelangelo (1475-1564) and Raphael (1483-1520), two of Florence's greatest painters. Perhaps this early inclusion of both artists on the club schedule indicates that the club's admiration for the great artworks of Michaelangelo and Raphael factored into its decision to choose the name Florentine. In its first spring, the club most commonly paired a paper on the life and work of a great artist with a discussion of an artistic form or type. On the night that they learned about Michaelangelo, members also discussed art in religion. Paired with a paper on Raphael was a discussion of Fresco painting. Other painters studied in the spring of 1900 included Peter Paul Rubens (Flemish, 1577-1640), Anthony Van Dyke (Flemish, 1599-1641), Rembrandt (Dutch, 1606-1699), Jean Baptiste-Camille Corot (French, 1796-1875), and Rosa Bonheur (French, 1822-1899). Discussion topics included public art galleries, great portraits of the world, the place painting occupies in reference to other arts, the appeals of landscape painting, and animal painters. These topics sometimes had no connection to the painter being studied, while at other times they directly related. For example, the discussion of landscape painting was held on the night that the biography of Corot, a landscape painter, was scheduled. On the night that the club discussed animal painters, they learned about Rosa Bonheur, a painter of animals. While no one particular genre of art emerges in the list of topics studied in the spring of 1900, all were European and the majority from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries. At the last meeting of the year, May 19, the club

celebrated the successful end of their first club season with the inclusion of a piano solo and vocal number by club members.²³³

In the spring of 1902, the Florentine Club studied Italian and German art and architecture. In February and March, members discussed Italian painters Giovanni (1430-1516) and Gentile (1429-1507) Bellini, as well as a variety of well-known Italian buildings. These included the Milan Cathedral, the largest Gothic cathedral in the world; Pisa Cathedral, a Romanesque structure; and the famous Leaning Tower of Pisa. On April 3, before beginning German art, club members took a break and devoted their meeting to music, entertaining readings, and a social hour. The remainder of April and May were devoted to the study of Germany, including Vienna and the musician Muncaski. Material on the German artist Cuno Bodenhausen was not available, so the club omitted him from the program. On May 31, the club read from the lectures of John L. Stoddard (1850-1931) on the art treasures of Berlin. Stoddard's many lectures were compiled into fifteen volumes and published beginning in 1897. The lectures on Berlin came from volume 6, *Berlin, Vienna, St. Petersburg, and Moscow*.²³⁴

In the 1903-1904 club year, the Florentine Club primarily studied British art. Club members learned about English artists and architecture. The artists were all eighteenth and nineteenth century figures. Those under consideration included Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788), Henry Fuseli (1741-1825), George Romney (1734-1802), John Hoppner (1758-1810), Sir Thomas Lawrence (1769-1830), Frederick Lord

²³³ Florentine Club Minutes, 24 February 1900, 10 March 1900, 24 March 1900, 7 April 1900, 21 April 1900, 4 May 1900, 19 May 1900, Florentine Club Records, Cragun House, Boone County Historical Society, Lebanon, Indiana.

²³⁴ Florentine Club Minutes, 18 February 1902, 2 March 1902, 3 April 1902, 19 April 1902, 3 May 1902, 17 May 1902, 31 May 1902; John L. Stoddard, *John L. Stoddard's Lectures* (New York: Middlebrook & Co., 1897).

Leighton (1830-1896), and Edward Burne-Jones (1833-1898). In addition to English artists, the Florentine Club studied the architecture of British cathedrals, especially Westminster Abbey, a Gothic cathedral in London. They also read *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, a text by Victorian architect John Ruskin first published in 1849. Ruskin argued that architecture should have seven attributes: sacrifice, truth, power, beauty, life, memory, and obedience. He believed Gothic architecture to be the noblest form.²³⁵ Not all topics for the year conformed to the criteria of English art. On a few occasions, the club deviated from the usual subject to study other topics. On March 2, the clubwomen discussed Christ in American art. On February 13, they studied Florentine painter Fra Filippo Lippi (1406-1469) and John Singleton Copley (1738-1815), an American colonial era painter.²³⁶

During 1904-1905, the Florentine Club studied a wide variety of topics related to American art. These included studies of artists and general topics related to American art. The artists studied included painter Gilbert Stuart (1755-1828), sculptor George Bernard (unk.), painter Winslow Homer (1836-1910), and sculptor Frederick McMonnies (unk.). The club began the year with a general study of the history of American art, and later covered the aims and ideals of American art. Other general topics included American sculpture combined with the biographies of famous sculptors and women illustrators of child life. Like the Ladies' Piano Club, the study of female artists by the Florentine Club appears to have been a rare undertaking.²³⁷

²³⁵ John Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1849).

²³⁶ Florentine Club Minutes, 11 November 1903, 12 December 1903, 16 January 1904, 13 February 1904, 27 February 1904, 2 March 1904, 23 April 1904, 7 May 1904.

²³⁷ Florentine Club Minutes, 8 October 1904, 29 October 1904, 19 November 1904, 14 January 1905, 18 March 1905.

The club year 1906-1907 featured a miscellaneous program of art, poetry, music, etc. Artists studied included Michaelangelo and Rembrandt, both of whom appeared in earlier club programs. Other art discussed in the year focused on form rather than an individual artist: oriental rugs, antique furniture, American potteries, China painting, illustrators, etchings, and masterpieces of painting and sculpture. In December, as a part of their Christmas program, members read papers on "the Christ child in art" and "the God man in art," to which the secretary exclaimed, "These had been carefully prepared and made doubly interesting by a good display of pictures related to the subjects." Unrelated topics included a discussion of Indiana poet James Whitcomb Riley and a rendition of his poems, a correspondence day with former members of the club, vocal selections, and a talk about St. Patrick's Day by a local Catholic priest. The club also made a field trip in November to the Herron Art Institute gallery in Indianapolis.²³⁸

In the spring of 1908, the Florentine Club studied French and German art, interspersed with some musical selections. In January, February, and March, they discussed French pottery, French realist painter Jules Breton (1827-1906), French painter Jean Antoine Watteau (1684-1721), French furniture, and French actress Sarah Bernhardt (1844-1923). The club also studied Versailles, the country residence of the French monarchy. Under the reign of Louis XIV, the palace became not only a beautiful work of architecture, but also a despised symbol of absolute monarchy. These meetings also interspersed selections of piano music from French composer Cecile Chaminade.²³⁹

²³⁸ Florentine Club Minutes, 20 October 1906, 3 November 1906, 17 November 1906, 30 November 1906, 1 December 1906, 15 December 1906, 15 January 1907, 22 January 1907, 2 February 1907, 16 February 1907, 2 March 1907, 16 March 1907.

²³⁹ Florentine Club Minutes, 25 January 1908, 4 February 1908, 22 February 1908, 14 March 1908.

In April and May 1908, the club focused on German culture. Authors and composers, rather than artists, comprised the majority of meetings. These included poet, philosopher, and dramatist Frederich von Schiller (1759-1805); Johann Goethe (1749-1832), a playwright, poet, and scientist; and composer Richard Wagner (1813-1883). Attention to German art comprised the agenda of May 9, when members focused on German child and peasant painting.²⁴⁰

In the spring of 1910, the Florentine Club took a break from the study of art to discuss other topics, none of which appear to have been related. For example, on January 22, members organized a Patriotic Program, which consisted of a discussion of American symbols and several musical selections. On April 9, the club discussed China and then studied Eugene Field (1850-1895), an American children's poet. On April 23, members discussed the Indianapolis Soldiers and Sailors Monument, followed by several literary readings. Had the Florentine Club finally tired of studying art after ten long years? Minutes of later club meetings suggest not, although in the years after 1910 examples of non-art topics, or those tangentially related to the study of art, appear more frequently in club programs. This suggests that, as the Florentine Club aged, it broadened its scope of interest.²⁴¹

Like the Ladies' Piano Club, Florentine Club minutes note occasional instances of large absence from meetings in the early years of the club's existence. These absences ranged from four to seven in a group whose total membership included around fifteen women.²⁴² Unlike the Ladies' Piano Club, programs did not appear to suffer from loss of attendees. Whereas Ladies' Piano Club absences resulted in shortened or cancelled

²⁴⁰ Florentine Club Minutes, 11 April 1908, 25 April 1908, 9 May 1908.

²⁴¹ Florentine Club Minutes, 22 January 1910, 9 April 1910, 23 April 1910.

²⁴² Florentine Club Minutes, 20 January 1901, 18 February 1901, 2 March 1902, 7 February 1903.

programs when members scheduled to present missed a meeting, Florentine records do not indicate that large absences affected programs. Instead, absent members were almost always those whose names did not appear on that day's program. With a few exceptions, absent members scheduled to present sent their papers with another member. What does this indicate about the difference between the women of each club? Were the women of the Florentine Club more dedicated to the study of art than the women of the Ladies' Piano Club were to music, or did the Ladies' Piano Club members simply have more responsibilities to shuffle? A review of the membership characteristics defined in Chapter 1 provides a few answers. The demographics of charter members of the Ladies' Piano Club and Florentine Club were predominately similar. Both groups yielded high percentages of single women, of whom teachers were the most common occupation. The Ladies' Piano Club did not, then, appear to have had a larger degree of burden of additional responsibilities. This would change in the first few years, as married women constituted 58 percent of new members, but in the first year of their existence members of the Ladies' Piano Club may indeed have been less serious scholars. Perhaps the charter members of the Florentine Club more judiciously chose associates who would be devoted to the work of the club than did charter members of the Ladies' Piano Club.

While the Florentine Club's method of limiting its study to one particular area of interest more closely mirrored the Ladies' Piano Club than the Zerelda Reading Club, differences still existed. In its study of art, the Florentine Club occasionally made room for other topics, such as music and literature. The Ladies' Piano Club, on the other hand, did not tend to widen its musical agenda. Perhaps Florentine Club members, whose allegiances to other clubs were established in Chapter 1, added these literary and musical

topics to their program due to inspiration from the program of one of their other clubs. At the very least, records indicate that the Florentine Club chose to widen its understanding of the world through the use of topics outside of the members' chosen field of art.

A Note On Social Activity

How seriously did the women of the three clubs under consideration pursue their study activity? Nationally, women's clubs appear to have varied in the amount of time devoted to study versus that devoted to socializing. In the Zerelda Reading Club, the Ladies' Piano Club, and the Florentine Club, social activity crept into club programs, but did not significantly diminish the quality of study agendas.

Minutes of the Zerelda Reading Club indicate that the majority of club meetings stuck to their agendas, which, as demonstrated earlier in the chapter, were always packed with learning opportunities. Occasionally, the women interrupted study activity to participate in a social event. Usually these activities involved spending an evening with their husbands. On 28 December 1887, for example, the Zerelda husbands planned a special evening for their wives. Minutes note, "the ladies were completely surprised by the entrance of their husbands with preparations for a grand repast." On 22 June 1888, the husbands invited club members to Lake Side Park, where they had dinner at Harry Pease's restaurant and then boated on the lake. On another occasion, the study portion of a meeting was cancelled so that members could attend a lodge party.²⁴³ Members also frequently held guest meetings, which consisted of dinner, music, and recitations, and held annual banquets on the club's anniversary.²⁴⁴

²⁴³ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 28 December 1887, 4 January 1888, 22 June 1888.

²⁴⁴ See for example, Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 5 February 1888.

Minutes of the Ladies' Piano Club indicate that members interrupted their studies less frequently than the Zerelda Reading Club. They held annual guest days at the end of the club year. These meetings still contained musical selections, but also included a luncheon and social hour.²⁴⁵ The club also hosted parties upon the marriage of a member. In 1899, they planned a party for Mattie Tucker, which consisted of dinner, musical selections, and lighthearted compositions written by members. In 1908, a similarly structured gathering was held for Kate Persise.²⁴⁶ Thus, even when members of the Ladies' Piano Club recessed from their normal study schedule, they still tended to include music in their entertainment.

The Florentine Club, while maintaining a strict agenda of study, left more room for social activity at its meetings. In fact, at most meetings, after the program was completed, members socialized over lunch or refreshments. This did not change as the years progressed. Occasionally, entire evenings were set aside for fellowship and no program was prepared, although this was out of the ordinary. The club also entertained guests informally from time to time, and more rarely planned guest day celebrations. For example, members ended their first year with a guest day for their mothers, in which the women showcased what the club had learned and served refreshments.²⁴⁷

Summary

The women of the Zerelda Reading Club, Ladies' Piano Club, and Florentine Club all took up different topics of study, but all remained equally devoted to education.

²⁴⁵ See for example, Ladies' Piano Club Minutes, 2 June 1910.

²⁴⁶ Ladies' Piano Club Minutes, 19 March 1908, 28 December 1899.

²⁴⁷ See for example, Florentine Club Minutes, 7 April 1900, 6 October 1900, 18 December 1900, 9 November 1901, 20 December 1901, 5 April 1902, 31 May 1902, 14 January 1905, 25 January 1908, 8 February 1908, 24 October 1908.

While the Zerelda Reading Club studied a wide variety of topics including history, literature, and music, the Ladies' Piano Club and Florentine Club focused on one particular topic, music and art, respectively. While they were studying different topics, the three clubs read their books, wrote their compositions, and practiced their music with a common goal: to gain the refinement derived from a cultural education. The Florentine Club and the Ladies' Piano Club interpreted culture more narrowly, focusing on a particular aspect to improve upon. On the other hand, the Zerelda Reading Club delved into a wide variety of educational endeavors including discussions of local affairs and issues of particular relevance to their everyday lives. The Zerelda Reading Club members thus shared the broadest definition of self-culture, one that extended beyond the traditional Victorian value of women's refinement.

What, then, can be learned from a review of the study practices of small town clubwomen? Perhaps the most valuable insight gained is that study practice and topic were largely individual decisions. Whether a club borrowed a year's program from another club, purchased an outline of musical history or theory, or invented topics of particular import to their daily lives, members exerted a large amount of individual preference and responsibility over the final selections that they chose. The most resourceful clubs applied their studies to their own unique situations, but the finesse acquired from the study of art or music cannot be discounted as a less valid form of expression. Similar conclusions can be drawn from the seriousness with which women undertook study endeavors. While all three clubs experienced occasional lapses of member interest, most likely associated with family responsibility, illness, or competing

local events, lack of attendance only impeded the ability of the Ladies' Piano Club to progress in its studies by forcing members to cancel or shorten programs.

All three clubs spent the majority of their time studying lessons, but none took themselves too seriously. The Zerelda Reading Club occasionally refrained from an evening of work to enjoy a social outing with members' husbands. The largely unmarried Florentine Club and mixed single/married Ladies' Piano Club chose social activities more appropriate for their composition. The Florentine Club usually included social activity as a conclusion to a meeting whereas the Ladies' Piano Club held guest days and occasional parties to celebrate milestones in members' lives. Again, these practices have little in common and serve to illustrate that while all three clubs viewed social activity as a valid community-building practice, individual plans were the result of local happenings, individual taste, and marital status.

CHAPTER 4: CIVIC IMPROVEMENT

In the years between 1900 and World War I, Americans enacted many social and economic reforms. As a result, these years became known as the Progressive Era. Countless women participated in civic improvement activities designed to enhance the aesthetics, culture, and health of their cities. These activities were often termed "municipal housekeeping," and many women participated as part of a civic improvement organization or women's club. Historians looking at the impact of these women have found that their work aided in the development of social services, spearheaded efforts to rid cities of pollution, and brought many cultural institutions, such as libraries, to the city.

In looking at the roles that women played, historians generally agree that they were successful because they defined their work within the confines of the domestic sphere. Rather than advocating duties outside of women's traditional roles, these women redefined their sphere to include the care of the entire town or city. Settlement house workers, for example, sought to obtain better living conditions for the poor residents of their wards. In Chicago, Jane Addams authored a 1903 report on tenement conditions, highlighting the efforts of Dr. Alice Hamilton to prove that the bad plumbing in the ward's tenement buildings caused an increased incidence of typhoid in the area.²⁴⁸ In New York City, Mary Kingsbury Simkhovitch, founder of Greenwich Settlement House, placed an exhibit on population congestion in New York at the Museum of Natural

²⁴⁸ Harold L. Platt, "Jane Addams and the Ward Boss Revisited: Class, Politics, and Public Health in Chicago, 1890-1930," *Environmental History* 5 (April 2000): 202-3.

History in 1908, in order to prompt action on the problem.²⁴⁹ The College Settlement Association moved into a home on the lower east side of New York, among Jewish and Catholic immigrants. As municipal housekeepers, the women of the College Settlement Association created a built environment that included such social services as a public bath, library, playground, nursery, kindergarten, and music school for the community's poor residents.²⁵⁰

Women, individually and as members of clubs, often banded together into larger groups interested in a particular type of environmental reform. In Chicago, members of the Women's City Club sought improvements to the city's landscape that would benefit individuals and the home. When Chicago officials considered options for the development of their lakefront, the Woman's City Club advocated the use of the space for leisure activities, like beaches. The men's Commercial Club, on the other hand, favored industrial development, and eventually utilized the lakefront for this purpose.²⁵¹

Women's club federations also took up issues of conservation. In Pennsylvania, the State Federation fought for environmental reform after members became interested in the air and water pollution caused by industrialization. In California, members of the State Federation worked to preserve the state's great redwood trees.²⁵²

²⁴⁹ Susan Marie Wirka, "The City Social Movement: Progressive Women Reformers and Early Social Planning," in *Planning the Twentieth Century American City*, ed. Mary Corbin Sies and Christopher Silver (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 63, 67.

²⁵⁰ Daphne Spain, *How Women Saved the City* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 132-4.

²⁵¹ Maureen Flanagan, "The City Profitable, the City Livable: Environmental Policy, Gender, and Power in Chicago in the 1910s," *Journal of Urban History* 22 (January 1996): 166, 169, 171.

²⁵² Susan Rimby, "'Better Housekeeping Out of Doors': Mira Lloyd Dock, the State Federation of Pennsylvania Women, and Progressive Era Conservation," *Journal of Women's History* 17 (Fall 2005): 13; Cameron Binkley, "'No Better Heritage than Living Trees': Women's Clubs and Early Conservation in Humboldt County," *Western Historical Quarterly* 33 (Summer 2002): 180.

All of these groups utilized distinctly female rhetoric to advance their causes. In Pennsylvania, Mira Lloyd Dock used this rhetoric in an 1899 lecture to the Ridgeway Village Improvement Association, when she described natural areas preserved by the Federation as "housekeeping out of doors."²⁵³ Members of the Monday Club of Eureka, California, carefully constructed their advocacy of redwood conservation in language that their husbands would feel represented an activity within the female sphere. Members continually referenced the home and conservation for the sake of the family. One member, Mrs. Burdette, called the forests "the great natural reservoirs of the water supply that have made possible our homes, our health, and our prosperity."²⁵⁴

Like the women who devoted their time solely to reform activities, study club members branched out to philanthropy in gender-specific ways. The women chose causes that provided social benefits, such as building libraries, health care facilities, and social service agencies. They also chose distinctly female methods. For example, women often raised money through fundraisers rather than personal solicitations. They held bazaars, dances, plays, etc. At the same time, clubwomen strayed from traditional methodology of female benevolence in terms of economic rhetoric. Formerly, women never addressed the monetary aspects of benevolent work but instead left it to male collaborators. The clubwomen of the early twentieth century, however, publicized their control over their own finances. In 1915, the Chicago Women's Club published an account of its benevolent activities, "Statement of the Civic Achievements of the Chicago Woman's Club Prepared at the Request of the Building Committee by the President of the Club." In this document, members discussed the economic aspects of their charitable

²⁵³ Rimby, "Better Housekeeping Out of Doors," 19.

²⁵⁴ Binkley, "No Better Heritage than Living Trees," 182.

work, including the construction of a \$13,000 women's employment center, which succeeded in finding jobs for approximately 2,000 women.²⁵⁵

Clubwomen participated in a variety of civic improvement activities. Beginning around the turn of the century, women who had already spent years in self-improvement clubs and their daughters (who were more likely to have attained a higher level of schooling) found that they had less need for study and began incorporating benevolent activity into their programs. Karen Blair argues that this new clubwoman "was more confident and aggressive because she had alternative channels through which she could express her energies and talents."²⁵⁶

These clubwomen participated in local charitable endeavors, but, according to historians of the women's club movement, met with the most widespread success once they federated. The General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC), founded by Jane Cunningham Croly, offered women's clubs the opportunity to organize their civic improvement on a national level. A number of state and regional federations followed the example of the GFWC.²⁵⁷ Karen Blair finds that clubwomen moved in phases towards civic improvement activity. After spending time participating in self-improvement, women first began their philanthropic efforts by providing opportunities for others to benefit from study activities. They contributed books and magazines to schools and libraries, and in some instances worked to obtain library buildings. The clubwomen next moved from educational reforms to municipal housekeeping. The

²⁵⁵ Anne Ruggles Gere, *Intimate Practices: Literacy and Cultural Work in U.S. Women's Clubs, 1880-1920* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 113-114, 121-122.

²⁵⁶ Karen J. Blair, *The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914* (New York: Holmes and Meier Publishers, 1980), 99; Theodora Penny Martin, *The Sound of Our Own Voices: Women's Study Clubs, 1860-1910* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1987), 174-5.

²⁵⁷ Blair, *Clubwoman as Feminist*, 93, 96.

GFWC established committees, such as the Industrial and Child Labor Committee. Blair concludes that these steps occurred concurrent with the development of a feminist consciousness and eventually resulted in the GFWC's endorsement of women's suffrage.²⁵⁸

Clubwomen succeeded in organizing many innovative social services. In fact, they were so effective that the federal government later adopted many of their programs. For this reason, Blair concludes, "Culture study and growth of confidence became less relevant as clubwomen discovered, in bringing their beloved libraries and art programs to the public, that collectively they could bear considerable influence upon any issue they deemed important."²⁵⁹

The Zerelda Reading Club

From its earliest years, the minutes of the Zerelda Reading Club reveal that its members took an active interest in the welfare of their community. As Chapter 3 has shown, the club occasionally utilized its study sessions to learn about issues of particular importance to members' everyday lives. Members also utilized club meetings to plan community improvements. These included contributing to funds and actively planning their own solutions to community problems. On 6 February 1889, for example, the women discussed making a donation to the public library fund. After some debate, Clara Beck Funk suggested that a contribution be drawn from the club's treasury. The motion passed. Similarly, on 4 February 1907, the club voted to send \$2 to the Indiana Federation of Clubs as a donation to the federation's Robert Dale Owen memorial

²⁵⁸ Ibid., 100, 102-3, 105.

²⁵⁹ Ibid., 119.

fund.²⁶⁰ Owen had been active in the women's rights movement of the 1850s, while serving in the Indiana legislature, prompting the Indiana Federation of Clubs to declare, "We find that to him, more than to any other man, living or dead, are we indebted for some of our most valuable educational privileges and legal rights."²⁶¹ After securing enough donations, the federation eventually placed a bust of Owen in the Indiana State House.²⁶²

Rather than working alone, the Zerelda Reading Club tended to seek out other local clubs in efforts to effect changes in the community. An early attempt at local organization occurred in December 1897. On December 20, the club secretary reported that she had written a note to the other clubs in town asking them to appoint a committee to confer with a Zerelda committee regarding the formation of a union of city clubs. The Warsaw Club immediately noted its interest, but it is unknown how many other clubs also joined. Very little is known about the apparently short-lived Union of City Clubs, whose activities were neither reported in subsequent club minutes nor in local newspapers. The federation did apparently exist, however, because Zerelda minutes in May 1898 note an upcoming meeting of the organization, and in June, the treasurer paid twenty-five cents in dues.²⁶³

Perhaps the lack of news coverage indicates that the Union of City Clubs did not undertake any successful improvement activities. A note in the Zerelda minutes of September 1898 suggests that a lack of cooperation might have been to blame. At the

²⁶⁰ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 6 February 1889, 4 February 1907, Zerelda Reading Club Records, Old Jail Museum, Kosciusko County Historical Society, Warsaw, Indiana.

²⁶¹ Grace Gates Courtney, *History Indiana Federation of Clubs* (Fort Wayne: Fort Wayne Printing Company, 1939), 100.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 149.

²⁶³ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 20 December, 27 December 1897, 13 June, 30 May 1898.

September 19 meeting, the club secretary suggested that the Zerelda Reading Club cooperate with other local clubs in hiring violinist Florence George and soloist Edward Fransceau to give a public concert for "the purpose of encouraging a higher order of entertainment for the town." She noted that collaboration in such an endeavor might help to establish better cooperation between the clubs in town.²⁶⁴ Had federation been hindered by the types of petty differences so often mocked by adversaries of the women's club movement? Available records do not answer this question, but they do reveal telling details of Zerelda members' ambition. By trying to organize a local federation, the women not only articulated their interest in civic reform, but also their belief in the idea that the best way to bring about change was through the cooperative endeavor of as many of the town's women as possible. Their hope to accomplish such a feat would not disappear, and eventually the women of Warsaw would collaborate in a more successful federation.

Even among such a civic-minded group, members were not always willing to participate in improvement efforts. When the Warsaw Reading Club tried to organize a group to plan a public reading room, the Zerelda Reading Club chose not to participate. On 10 June 1901, the secretary read a note from the Warsaw Reading Club requesting that the club appoint a committee to meet regarding the plan to establish a public reading room. Mamie Conrad, Eliza Webber, and Emily Baker attended this meeting, but for unknown reasons, the club later decided not to help maintain a public library.²⁶⁵

Not all efforts yielded such disappointing results. One of the club's earliest community efforts resulted in great success. After discussing the decreasing morality of

²⁶⁴ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 19 September 1898.

²⁶⁵ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 10 June, 16 September 1901.

their children, Zerelda Reading Club members decided to hold a public meeting to educate other mothers on the problems children were facing and steps that mothers could take to curb undesirable behavior. In making their invitation in the local newspaper, the Zerelda members declared

The imminent danger is apparent to all. Let us rise to the needs of the crying demand for a higher moral standard in the community. Let us save the boys and girls for society, for the church, and for our homes. Let there be a popular uprising to forestall any further devastation in the minds and hearts of the children.²⁶⁶

After inviting all women of Warsaw to a meeting at Webber's Hall, two hundred persons arrived to discuss "the best means of securing pure homes and a higher standard of morality in society."²⁶⁷ The meeting was so successful that the ladies scheduled a second session the following week to conclude their discussion.

What types of concerns did the Zerelda women have, and what types of solutions did they propose? Their objectives were made known with the reprinting of Emma Butler's paper in the *Warsaw Daily Times*. She read this paper on the night that the club discussed the necessity of a public meeting. In it, Butler argued that young boys were becoming insensitive, noting that those who were cruel to their pets would later be cruel to their wives. She also noted that too many children were becoming spoiled and selfish, as a result of parents allowing them too many liberties to choose to act as they wished. She further noted that children did not get enough sleep. Instead, they spent their days at school and their nights with friends. She therefore concluded, "Is it any wonder that the girl who entered society at fourteen is old at twenty-four?" Girls had several additional problems. Butler found that they were keeping company with males of ill-repute well

²⁶⁶ "Public Meeting," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 18 December 1890.

²⁶⁷ "The Ladies' Meeting," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 22 December 1890.

into the night. As a result, she declared, "Day by day, I look into the faces of young girls who look back to me with eyes less pure and face less open than just one year ago!"²⁶⁸

Butler suggested several solutions to these problems. She argued that mothers held responsibility for the behavior of their children, grandchildren, and all future descendents. For girls, she urged that mothers regulate their friends, forbid them to congregate in the streets, accompany them outside of the home, and oversee their correspondence. For boys, she recommended that mothers teach self-control. In order for mothers to do their best, she argued that they needed to study: "If mothers will but study carefully the duties of their position, and faithfully, patiently, lovingly discharge them from day to day, there will be few heart-aches for them, and little sufferings for their loved ones...." She urged them to study the Bible, as well as books on human nature, to better understand their children. She also encouraged cooperation between teachers and parents. Butler pointed out two failures in the public schools. The first was overcrowding, which gave teachers less time to provide personal attention to students. The second was the prevalence of young, naïve teachers who were not aware of the moral dilemmas of their students. While her prior suggestions were all highly domestic, her solution to this problem required women to step beyond their accepted roles. She argued that in order to maintain morality in the schools, school boards needed to consist of one-half women. She noted that Chicago already had women on its school board. While the women present undoubtedly benefited from many of Butler's suggestions, it does not

²⁶⁸ Emma Butler, "The Rights of Children and the Duties of Parents," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 27 December 1890.

appear that any serious attention was given to the matter of putting women on the school board.²⁶⁹

Case Study: The Ladies' Civic Committee and the Women's Rest Room

On 18 September 1905, Victoria Beck Moon proposed that the Zerelda Reading Club unite with the other clubs of the city to establish a Ladies Rest Room. As far as records indicate, the clubs had not actively worked together since the 1897-1898 attempt to establish a local federation. While the Zerelda ladies favored the proposal, Moon did not have any immediate success in drawing others to the cause.²⁷⁰

Ironically, it was not until the men of Warsaw extended an invitation to the clubwomen that the first successful federation organized. The following year, on 23 April 1906, the secretary of the Zerelda Reading Club read a letter from members of the commercial committee of the Ten Thousand Club, a men's group in the city. They asked that the Zerelda women send five members to a meeting with women from other clubs to discuss civic improvement. Their goal was to make the town "more beautiful than ever this summer." The meeting was held at the office of Joseph S. Baker, with members Victoria Beck Moon, Mrs. Richardson, Jennie Webber, Mabel Stephenson, and Miss Chipman in attendance. Other clubs invited included the Warsaw Reading Club, Clio Club, Veloma Club, and Chautauqua Circle. The committee wanted the women to plant trees, shrubs, and flowers.²⁷¹ The meeting was a success, and the women's clubs of Warsaw organized a permanent federation, the Ladies' Civic Committee, with president

²⁶⁹ A search through articles running in the *Warsaw Daily Times* for the next three months did not make any mention of action taken to add women to the school board.

²⁷⁰ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 18 September 1905.

²⁷¹ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 1 April 1907; "Meeting of the Ladies Tonight," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 2 May 1906.

Victoria Beck Moon and secretary Mrs. J.J. Early. They were to work in conjunction with the Ten Thousand Club.²⁷²

The women divided the town into four sections for distribution of flower seeds and to clean alleys and streets. Mrs. J.H. Lones and Mrs. J.W. Scott offered to visit the school to enlist the help of children. Secretary Mrs. Early wrote to a Congressman Brick to ask if he could provide them with some seeds from the Bureau of Plant Industry. These included flower and vine seeds.²⁷³

Why the sudden desire to beautify Warsaw? The women of the city had certainly attempted to federate before for the purposes of working towards civic improvement, but what made the Spring of 1906 the moment that these women finally met with success? A notice in the *Warsaw Daily Times* on 3 May 1906 provides one possible answer. In this article, City Marshal Winebrenner appealed to the citizens to clean up the town as completely as possible for the upcoming meeting of the Indiana Commandery of Knights Templar at Winona Lake. As part of the meeting, the knights had planned a parade through the streets of Warsaw the following week. Many out-of-town guests would be present. While the women certainly would not be able to accomplish growth of plants in one week, the article suggested that these improvements would greatly benefit the town in the upcoming months when tourists would be visiting. Nearby Winona Lake had developed into a major tourist attraction in the previous years, and Warsaw obviously hoped to capitalize on the abundance of visitors. The article stated that cleanliness and

²⁷² "To Meet Again Friday Night," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 3 May 1906; "Flower Seeds Desired," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 27 March 1907.

²⁷³ "Ladies are Interested," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 5 May 1906; "Ladies to Secure Seeds," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 22 May 1906.

beauty would hopefully "make an impression upon summer visitors and some may in that way be induced to make this place their future home."²⁷⁴

The work of the Ladies' Civic Committee must have met with great success because the following spring the group reconvened to plan a new course of action.²⁷⁵ Members planned to plant an even larger quantity of flower seeds, shrubs, and other plants, and encourage proper upkeep of the town. They asked that residents support their efforts by dropping off flower seeds at a local school.²⁷⁶ Besides planting, the committee decided to work on acquiring more playgrounds for the children of Warsaw. By October 1907, they had petitioned the city council to provide a playground, noting that children had nowhere to play after the city banned them from congregating in the streets. The women addressing the council included two Zerelda members, Mrs. Richardson and Mrs. Bowser. They had already secured permission from the owner of a tract of land northeast of the junction of the Pennsylvania and Big Four railway tracks and in front of the Big Four passenger station to use that plot as a park for a period of three years, provided that the owner would not have to pay the \$14 dollars in annual taxes. The civic committee wanted the city to pay the taxes and improve the lot by clearing weeds and garbage. Councilmen reacted in varying ways. One argued that three years was too short a time to warrant spending so much money for improvements. Another thought that playgrounds should fall under the jurisdiction of the school board. Councilman John Trish, son of Zerelda member Julia Trish, approved of the playground. Mayor Rigdon also offered his support, stating

²⁷⁴ "Clean up the City," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 3 May 1906.

²⁷⁵ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes, 1 April 1907.

²⁷⁶ "Flower Seeds Desired," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 27 March 1907.

We are driving the children from the streets. The boys are no longer allowed to play baseball, shinny, quoits, or any other game on the streets or in the alleys. There is a city ordinance against it and they know that they are liable to arrest....I believe that they should be provided with a place to play and I am heartily in favor of the proposition brought to the attention of this body by the representatives of the civic league.²⁷⁷

Eventually, the council agreed that the finance committee would inspect the plot and determine if it was a fit area for a playground. No further mention appeared in local papers, perhaps indicating that the council ultimately took no action.²⁷⁸

Desires for play space did not disappear. The following year, the council again considered a motion to provide a playground, this time at the west ward school. Local papers do not indicate the role that the civic committee played in this attempt. Petitioners to the city council argued, "There is no yard about the school building, making it necessary for the youngsters to play in the streets, on the sidewalks, and sometimes in the neighboring yards." The city council again divided on the issue. City attorney Walter Brubaker, a husband of one Zerelda member, argued that the school board would be a more appropriate entity to make a decision. The mayor favored the proposal, noting that the school board was subordinate to the council. In the end, however, the biggest problem became money. Daniel Bitner agreed to sell adjoining land, but for more money than the council was willing to pay. His sale required two main conditions: first, that a building could never be erected on the property and second, that he be paid no less than \$25 per foot. The council agreed to think it over, but as in earlier efforts, the newspaper reported no further action.²⁷⁹

²⁷⁷ "Plan a Public Park," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 10 October 1907.

²⁷⁸ Ibid.

²⁷⁹ "Want a Playground," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 12 March 1908.

In the three years since Victoria Beck Moon had proposed to build a women's rest room, the women's clubs of Warsaw had succeeded in mending their differences and organizing into a successful group dedicated to civic improvements. They had established relationships with men's civic groups, addressed the town council on behalf of children, and brought beauty to the city through their plantings. The time had finally come to revisit the failed attempt at gaining a women's rest room. Mrs. Moon most likely spearheaded this renewed interest, and would continue to serve on the newly formed rest room committee after it had been established.²⁸⁰

On 8 August 1907 an item appeared in the *Warsaw Daily Times* noting that Mrs. J.H. Lones and Mrs. Victoria Moon had appeared before the county board of commissioners to request that the Ladies' Civic Committee be allowed to furnish rooms in the southeast corner of the court house basement for use as women's rest rooms. If approved, the committee would be responsible for the expense. The commissioners granted the request. The city council donated \$25 to assist in carrying out the plan. The Ladies' Civic Committee had already been planning the necessary changes. It hired construction workers to build a door in place of one basement window to allow easy access. The women planned a reading room, a lounge, and lavatory facilities. They declared it would "be for the free use of all ladies and children in Kosciusko county at all times."²⁸¹

After construction ended, the ladies decorated the rest rooms with carpets, furniture, pictures, books, and magazines. The whole process took about three months, and the facility finally opened during the week of 21 November 1907. The rooms were

²⁸⁰ "Ladies Civic Committee," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 11 March 1908.

²⁸¹ "To Have Rest Rooms," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 8 August 1907; "Rest Room for Men," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 25 July 1908.

meant to be comfortable and exude the charm of home, as evidenced by the elaborate descriptions provided in the paper. It described the first room as "well lighted by several windows, which have been provided with handsome curtains. A large rug covers the floor and the furniture consists of several chairs and a bookcase, provided with a few books and magazines, several pictures have also been hung on the wall." The second room, a lounge, contained a table, chairs, and some other furniture. The women's lavatory was accessible from the first room.²⁸²

To the women of the Ladies' Civic Committee a space dedicated to women's needs was an obvious necessity. Visitors, especially, had no place to rest or relax while waiting on husbands, children, or friends. This concerned the women of the committee, who several weeks prior, had secured permission to place seats on the sidewalk at the edge of the court house lawn to give visitors a place to rest.²⁸³ The rest rooms greatly benefited the women of Warsaw, but perhaps initially benefited visitors most. One group the ladies expected to be most grateful for the new accommodations were farmers' wives. These women accompanied their husband to town on weekends, and after finishing their shopping, had no place to await the conclusion of their husbands' business. A few weeks after the rest room opened, the *Warsaw Daily Times* reported that the farmer's wives loved the new accommodations, as they now had somewhere to rest besides local shops. The rest rooms were so well liked by visitors that the concept soon spread to neighboring towns. The *Warsaw Daily Times* reported

Since it has gotten out that Warsaw has seen fit to provide a place for visiting women to rest, the people in other county-seat cities and other towns of northern Indiana are taking up with the idea and judging from the reports in the newspapers of other places farmers' wives and other women

²⁸² "Will Open Friday," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 21 November 1907.

²⁸³ "To Have Rest Rooms," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 8 August 1907.

visiting in the various cities are to be given considerable consideration in the future.²⁸⁴

By 1909, the rooms had taken on another important function. They had become the meeting place for the Ladies' Civic Committee, as it planned future improvement activities. In less than two years, the rest room had become tremendously successful, with more than 2,000 patrons signing its register.²⁸⁵

Before long, the success of the women inspired the city's men to lobby for their own rest rooms. Mayor Rigdon asked the commissioners to provide the town's men with access to the two vacant rooms in the north side of the basement for lounging.

Particularly, the *Warsaw Daily Times* noted, "Attention is called to the fact that now Warsaw is without saloons and there is no place for many men to go, particularly in the winter time."²⁸⁶ Not only had the women of Warsaw succeeded in creating rest rooms that improved the daily lives of women in the county, but they had also served as an inspiration to the town's men to follow in their footsteps.

The Ladies' Piano Club

The vast majority of public activity undertaken by the Ladies' Piano Club involved its musical mission. The club offered paid public concerts and open meetings to local residents. These musical entertainments provided residents with an opportunity to expand their cultural experiences. Like the many women who hoped to provide opportunities for local citizens to experience art or music, the women of the Ladies' Piano Club probably believed that exposure to music would uplift the morals of the community.

²⁸⁴ "Rest Rooms Liked," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 7 December 1907.

²⁸⁵ "Woman's League for Improvement Will Raise Money for Improvements to Ladies' Rest Room in Courthouse," *Warsaw Union*, 27 April 1909.

²⁸⁶ "Rest Room for Men," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 25 July 1908.

The club held open meetings once per year. These were opportunities for members to invite non-members to hear the musical selections club members had prepared.²⁸⁷ The club also offered paid concerts open to the entire community. One of these occurred in February 1905. The club decided to hire three Louisville performers: Mrs. Katherine Whipple-Dobbs, Mr. Douglas Webb, and Professor Karl Schmidt. Member Mrs. Carl Wilson accompanied them on the piano. The club sold one hundred sixty-nine tickets in advance at thirty-five cents each, and several additional tickets at the door, for receipts totaling \$66.05. The concert was a great success in the minds of the members, who exclaimed, "The program was of unusual merit and well-received."²⁸⁸

The club also occasionally participated in civic improvement activities. Most notably, they joined the town in its endeavor to obtain a public library.

Case Study: Salem's Carnegie Public Library

From 1886 to 1918, Carnegie grants were responsible for the construction of 2,509 library buildings in English-speaking western countries. In these years, Andrew Carnegie, a wealthy industrialist, donated \$56,162,622 for these libraries. Carnegie began his donations cautiously in the last years of the nineteenth century, giving grants for twenty-six libraries in 1899. After the turn of the century, however, his grants increased exponentially, and in 1903 he donated to two hundred and four new libraries. A couple of factors made Carnegie's donations particularly important. Libraries had been in existence for the better part of the nineteenth century, but his decision to fund the construction of public libraries coincided with the movement for the new, modern library.

²⁸⁷ Ladies' Piano Club Minutes, 19 November 1901, 10 December 1901, 25 February 1909, Ladies' Piano Club Records, Stevens Museum, Washington County Historical Society, Salem, Indiana.

²⁸⁸ Ladies' Piano Club Minutes, 19 January 1905, 16 February 1905.

Proponents of the modern library advocated making resources available to all citizens, not just to those who met certain criteria. Carnegie's gifts also coincided with an increased interest on the part of towns and cities in building public libraries.²⁸⁹

In his desire to help improve the lives of the less fortunate, Carnegie chose library philanthropy because he believed libraries would provide the necessary education for any individual willing to improve himself. This philosophy, that the poor should only be helped if they were willing to improve themselves, stemmed from the popular Protestant ideology of the late nineteenth century.²⁹⁰ In stating this objective, Carnegie declared

The main consideration should be to help those who will help themselves; to provide part of the means by which those who desire to improve may do so; to give those who desire to rise the aids by which they may rise; to assist, but rarely or never to do all.²⁹¹

Carnegie libraries succeeded in providing educational materials to many generations of Americans.

Indiana was one of the largest beneficiaries of Carnegie donations. Ranking fifth among states in total monetary contributions and first in the number of communities receiving grants, a total of one hundred fifty-five communities in Indiana benefited from Carnegie's philanthropy.²⁹² In fact, John Tucker asserts, "The state was so successful not only in obtaining Carnegie buildings but also in establishing public libraries that by 1920 only three predominately rural counties lacked library services."²⁹³ A number of

²⁸⁹ Abigail A. Van Slyck, *Free to All: Carnegie Libraries and American Culture, 1890-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 22, 25, 64; George S. Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1969), vii, 3, 159.

²⁹⁰ Van Slyck, *Free to All*, 10.

²⁹¹ Ibid.

²⁹² Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries*, 16, 19.

²⁹³ John Mark Tucker, "No Palace for the People: Carnegie Rejections in Indiana," in Robert Sidney Martin, ed., *Carnegie Denied: Communities Rejecting Carnegie Library Construction Grants, 1898-1925* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1993), 79.

phenomena caused this success. Between 1900 and 1920, unparalleled urbanization and industrialization caused many Indiana towns and cities to thrive economically. Soon, they began to desire cultural improvements like libraries. Tucker contends that because eastern cities and towns industrialized and built many libraries before Carnegie began offering his grants, the Midwest became the next natural recipient. Tucker also credits a spirit of competition characteristic among midwesterners for creating a chain reaction of requests for Carnegie grants in Indiana.²⁹⁴

Salem, Indiana, had a long history of interest in libraries and literacy before it applied for a Carnegie grant. Its first library, a room in the county court house, lasted from 1818 until 1830. The collection contained over two hundred volumes, purchased with money paid by subscribers and gathered through donations. There was no shortage of readers in the frontier settlement, as it boasted several educational institutions. Because it was one of the earliest frontier towns to maintain a level of culture more characteristic of established, eastern cities, Salem was nicknamed "the Athens of the West."²⁹⁵ An additional attempt to provide library service to Salem occurred in 1855, when William Maclure left \$500 in his will to establish a Workingman's Library. This effort met with little success.²⁹⁶

Nearly fifty years later, in 1900, the Fortnightly Club organized and soon began discussing the possibility of opening a public library. A county history later recalled that

²⁹⁴ Tucker, "No Palace for the People," 80-83.

²⁹⁵ Alan McPherson, *Temples of Knowledge: Andrew Carnegie's Gift to Indiana* (Kewanna, Indiana: Hoosier's Nest Press, 2003), 125; *History of Washington County, Indiana* (Paoli, Indiana: Stout's Print Shop, 1965), 767; Warder W. Stevens, *Centennial History of Washington County, Indiana: Its People, Industries and Institutions with Biographical Sketches of Representative Citizens and Genealogical Records of Many of the Old Families* (Indianapolis: B.F. Bowen, 1916; reprint: Utica, Kentucky: McDowell Publications, 1987), 622.

²⁹⁶ McPherson, *Temples of Knowledge*, 125.

the women thought a library would benefit the town's children.²⁹⁷ The club appointed Mrs. W.W. Stevens to chair a committee to solicit funds for the library building from local residents. Knowing that it would need the entire town's help in order to succeed, the club accepted help from many individuals and organizations. Elisha Hobbs, for example, agreed to chair a committee to obtain a Carnegie grant. According to the *Salem Democrat*, "A favorable reply came immediately."²⁹⁸ The committee received word on 20 February 1904 that it had qualified for a \$16,000 grant. Following the grant's stipulations, the town purchased a lot at the corner of Main and Mulberry streets for the library's location. Construction began immediately and the town dedicated its new library on 6 July 1905.²⁹⁹

Carnegie library grants came with many stipulations that the town had to meet. Before a grant could be secured, towns had to provide a site for the building and prove that it would provide continuing support for the library by collecting a yearly tax of at least \$1,000. Any town requesting a grant had to have a population of at least 1,000 residents. Women, like those of the Fortnightly Club, constituted the largest group to request Carnegie's help in obtaining a library. In 1933, the American Library Association (ALA) estimated that women had started 75 percent of all public libraries in the United States. While clubwomen were allowed to ask Carnegie for a grant, formal proceedings had to be governed by town officials. For example, the mayor's signature was required on the grant request form. Carnegie, himself, did not handle the business aspects of the

²⁹⁷ Stevens, *Centennial History*, 622-3.

²⁹⁸ "Carnegie Library," *Salem Democrat*, 12 July 1905.

²⁹⁹ Ibid.; McPherson, *Temples of Knowledge*, 125.

grants, but instead gave the responsibility to his secretary, James Bertrum. After a grant was secured, Bertrum sent the funds in small increments, rather than in one large sum.³⁰⁰

The Ladies' Piano Club did its part to make the new library building a success. In the years preceding the Carnegie donation in 1904, the club pledged \$5 per year to the library fund for two years. After the building opened, the club took up a collection to donate a piano to the library.³⁰¹

Besides making monetary contributions to the new public library, members of the Ladies' Piano Club took an active interest in its progress. The library board consisted of nine individuals, three of whom were members of the Ladies' Piano Club: Mrs. Harvey Morris, Mrs. W.J. Purkhiser, and Maud Wilson. Incidentally, these were also the only three women on the board. A number of the members offered their services in planning the library's dedication services. Mrs. W.J. Purkhiser, Grace Clarke, Myrtle Mitchell, and Clara Zink sang two quartettes along with four men. Daisy Hoggart accompanied both groups on the piano. Huge crowds attended the opening, and the newspaper reported that the only individuals unable to attend were local farmers, who were in the midst of harvesting crops.³⁰²

The Florentine Club

Whereas the Zerelda Reading Club frequently reported on its activities in civic improvement, the Florentine Club's activities were much more sporadic. Like the Zerelda Reading Club, the efforts of the Florentine Club members included a

³⁰⁰ Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries*, 43, 52, 57; Van Slyck, *Free to All*, 22, 124, 134; Martin, *Carnegie Denied*, viii.

³⁰¹ Ladies' Piano Club Minutes, 9 December 1902, 11 December 1903, 28 December 1905.

³⁰² "Carnegie Library," *Salem Democrat*, 12 July 1905.

combination of contributions of time and money to local causes. These included updating the public library, beautifying the county court house, and encouraging Lebanon residents to participate in cultural activities by furnishing art exhibits and musical performances. Between 1904 and 1906, the Florentine Club worked with the Lebanon Literary Club to improve the public library. In October 1904, the Lebanon Literary Club suggested that the clubs work together to furnish a room in the library. Florentine members discussed the exact details of the gift for over a year before finally deciding to supply the library with a picture in December 1906.³⁰³ In choosing to donate a picture, the club stayed true to its purpose of studying art. That same October 1904, the club planned an art exhibit, again highlighting their desire to share their interest in art with the community.³⁰⁴

By 1909, the Florentine Club diversified its activities. They decided to hold a musicale, with members performing musical selections. They also continued to participate in civic improvement work. In December 1910, for example, they agreed to beautify the court house yard at the request of a Mr. Carmichael.³⁰⁵ The Florentine Club members thus took on a variety of efforts to improve the beauty and culture of their town. Perhaps, however, none proved more lasting in its impact than their efforts to improve the Oak Hill Cemetery.

³⁰³ Florentine Club Minutes, 8 October 1904, 2 December 1906, Florentine Club Records, Cragun House, Boone County Historical Society, Lebanon, Indiana.

³⁰⁴ Florentine Club Minutes, 8 October 1904.

³⁰⁵ Florentine Club Minutes, 13 March 1909, 10 December 1910.

Case Study: The Florentine Club Improves Oak Hill Cemetery

Founded 28 March 1872 by Samuel Rodefer, Oak Hill Cemetery had existed for over twenty years as the Rodefer Cemetery when the Oak Hill Cemetery Association purchased it in 1899. The cemetery not only provided plots for deceased members of the town, but its well-manicured walkways had become a favorite recreational area for town residents on Sunday afternoons. Perhaps for this reason, the idea of purchasing the cemetery from Rodefer in order to maintain its beauty sparked widespread interest in the town. In 1899, interested residents including A.N. Holloway, A.E. Witt, Miss Cynthia Porter, and B.F. Coombs formed the Oak Hill Cemetery Association and began canvassing local individuals and organizations for donations towards the purchase price.³⁰⁶

By 17 May 1899, the association had succeeded in raising \$5,000 through the sale of five hundred ten-dollar shares, and began negotiations to purchase the cemetery. The transaction did not go smoothly, and by 8 June 1899, the *Lebanon Pioneer* reported that negotiations had stalled because Mr. Rodefer wanted a higher price than the association could afford. After a second round of negotiations, he lowered the price provided that he retain ownership of several lots in the center of the cemetery. The association, which had already completed an improvement plan, wanted ownership of the entire cemetery and urged Rodefer to reconsider. The newspaper noted that in case of a stand-off, the association had already consulted with attorneys about having the grounds condemned and turned over to the township trustees. Rodefer and the association apparently reached

³⁰⁶ "Cemetery Association Has Not Yet Succeeded in Consummating Negotiations with Mr. Rodefer," *Lebanon Pioneer*, 8 June 1899; "Our Heritage in Oak Hill Cemetery, Lebanon, Indiana: One Hundred Years of Community Service, 1872-1972," program dated 25 June 1972, Indiana State Library, Genealogy Division.

some compromise, because before long, the land had officially transferred into the hands of the cemetery association.³⁰⁷

Planned improvements began with a name change. The association chose the name Oak Hill because a very old white oak tree stood on the property. Over the course of the next few years, improvement activities included the purchase of several adjoining plots of land.³⁰⁸ The matter of purchasing and improving the cemetery drew supporters among both men and women. Beyond making monetary contributions, the women of Lebanon looked for additional ways to support to the project. On the same date that a news article appeared regarding hang-ups in negotiations with Rodefer, the *Lebanon Pioneer* reported that the women of Lebanon had organized a Federation of Clubs to advance the cause of the cemetery, but would also take up additional causes as needed. The official object of the federation stated that it would "bring together persons interested in any practical or benevolent work for the betterment of this city and community." The Florentine Club would not organize until a year later, but several of its early members became active in the federation through their associations with other clubs. Iva Flanigan represented the Lebanon Literary Club and the Euchre Club, Mary Harrison and Bertha Martin represented the University Extension Club, Lea Cory and Lydia Bell represented the Winona Circle.³⁰⁹

The federation quickly got to work, instituting a new constitution and by-laws. It appointed as president Mrs. R. W. Harrison, the mother of future Florentine Club

³⁰⁷ "Cemetery Association Has Not Yet Succeeded in Consummating Negotiations with Mr. Rodefer," "Our Heritage in Oak Hill Cemetery."

³⁰⁸ "Our Heritage in Oak Hill Cemetery."

³⁰⁹ "Permanent Organization - Federation of Clubs Taking Up Cemetery Question and Other Movements," *Lebanon Pioneer*, 8 June 1899; "Will Celebrate Fourth – The Federation of Societies Preparing an Excellent Program," *Lebanon Pioneer*, 8 June 1899.

member Mary Harrison. The federation members immediately decided that they could best raise money through hosting events and celebrations. Their first event, a concert of patriotic songs at the opera house, occurred on the evening of July 4. The following February, members planned a carnival, lasting three evenings. The carnival featured a "Gipsy" tent with fortune tellers, refreshments, a sale of ladies' handiwork, a tea, music, and a display of early American paintings. On Wednesday night, the women presented papers. Future Florentine member Iva Flannigan spoke about "Prophecies of the Future." On Friday night, the women of the federation performed a comedy, "The Donation Party at the Parson's." Actresses included future Florentine members Ruth Perkins, Katherine Hogshire, and Mary Harrison.³¹⁰

The carnival was very successful, attracting many residents and resulting in about two hundred dollars in profit, which the federation added to its cemetery fund. The women decided to save their money to procure an archway at the entrance of Oak Hill Cemetery. The *Lebanon Patriot* reported that the women had already successfully collected one hundred and sixty dollars, but planned to continue raising money until they had a sufficient amount to procure a suitable archway.³¹¹

As illustrated above, members of the Florentine Club participated in federation activities in order to raise money for the cemetery fund before they had even organized their own club. Once formed, the Florentine Club sponsored its own activities to benefit the cemetery fund. In the fall of 1900, shortly after organizing, they began planning an event to raise money for the cemetery. They initially planned a theatrical production, but eventually settled on a lecture. Reverend Demetrius Tillotson agreed to deliver the

³¹⁰ "Novel Entertainment, Federation of Clubs Furnishing Three Nights of Amusement at Lochinvar Hall," *Lebanon Patriot*, 22 February 1900.

³¹¹ "Ladies Carnival," *Lebanon Patriot*, 1 March 1900.

lecture, and Helen Caldwell made arrangements to hold the event at the Presbyterian Church. The club printed tickets and advertised.³¹²

The lecture took place at the end of February, and on 7 March 1901, the *Lebanon Patriot* reported that it had been a great success. Tillotson's lecture on "The Hebrew Twins" was well-received by a large crowd. The Florentine Club donated profits of twenty-six dollars to the cemetery fund, a far cry from the two hundred dollars earned by the federation, but still a worthy sum.³¹³

The women of the Florentine Club, along with members of the federation, continued their efforts to raise money for the cemetery archway for the next few years. Finally, in June 1904, the women had saved enough money and erected their archway at the Main Street entrance of the cemetery. The limestone structure cost a total of \$1,200.³¹⁴ Over the next several decades, the cemetery continued to be a source of pride for residents of Lebanon, as attested to in the program of the association's 1972 centennial celebration: "Today, Oak Hill is conceded to be one of Indiana's most beautiful and best cared for cemeteries...."³¹⁵ No doubt this achievement would not have been realized without the dedicated efforts of the women's clubs of Lebanon.

Summary

The women of the Zerelda Reading Club, Ladies' Piano Club, and Florentine Club all approached major improvement projects in similar ways. Rather than working alone, the women collaborated with other local clubs. The Zerelda Reading Club members took

³¹² Florentine Club Minutes, 21 October 1900, 18 February 1901.

³¹³ *Lebanon Patriot*, 7 March 1901; Florentine Club Minutes, 2 March 1901.

³¹⁴ "Our Heritage in Oak Hill Cemetery, Lebanon, Indiana."

³¹⁵ Ibid.

the initiative in advocating a ladies rest room, but did not accomplish their objective until after they joined the local Ladies' Civic Committee and collaborated on the endeavor.

The Florentine Club and Ladies' Piano Club, rather than creating their own civic improvement plans, chose to participate in work already undertaken by others.

In Warsaw, the town's men and women worked together to enact civic change. The Zerelda Reading Club directly participated in improvement activities through its participation and leadership in the Ladies' Civic Committee. While members' interest in community betterment had begun years before the committee formed, it represents the most successful of all their civic work between 1886 and 1910. Overall, the women of Warsaw focused their improvement work on activities that benefited their own community. Whether they were beautifying the town, improving the morals of children, or providing a space in the public sphere for women to congregate, all activities were intended to benefit the local community. Furthermore, civic improvement in Warsaw functioned as a partnership between men and women. Whether the men's group or the women's group came up with the idea, success depended on the support of both groups.

The Ladies' Piano Club participated in comparatively less civic improvement work. This fact is not necessarily a measure of their interest in community service but rather a determination to remain true to their purpose. The women may have participated in other community improvement efforts through membership in another club. As a result, their most frequent public work involved music: public concerts hosted by the club. At the same time, when a cause necessitated support from the entire community, the Ladies' Piano Club joined in. In the case of the Carnegie Public Library, the women donated sums of money, sat on the library board, and organized music for the building's

dedication. Like the ladies' rest room in Warsaw, the library building provided many worthwhile benefits to the community. The building provided a gathering space for local clubs or events and also brought education to a larger audience by providing free books and magazines to residents. Because such a large proportion of those eligible to utilize library services were farmers and their families, the library provided benefits otherwise unavailable to many individuals in the community.

The Florentine Club exhibited an enthusiasm for civic improvement somewhere between the level of activity produced by the Zerelda Reading Club and the Ladies' Piano Club. The club participated in causes, as needed, such as donating to the public library and furnishing the town with art exhibits. Their efforts to improve Oak Hill Cemetery, however, were arguably the most lasting contribution to Lebanon. In 1899 when the Cemetery Association purchased Oak Hill, future members of the club eagerly joined the new local federation in organizing a carnival to fund the endeavor. After organizing their own art club in 1900, the members of the Florentine Club immediately began planning a public lecture and donated the profits to the federation's cemetery fund. Unlike the activities of the other two clubs, whose improvements directly impacted the lives of the towns' residents, cemetery beautification had a more indirect effect on Lebanon's community. Cemetery beautification improved the aesthetics of the town and uplifted residents who visited their deceased loved ones. It also contributed to the movement to make the entire town beautiful.

All three clubs made meaningful contributions to the well-being of their communities. Their work in civic improvement provided valuable services to residents of their towns, improvements that continued to impact subsequent generations. Both the

Salem Public Library and the Oak Hill Cemetery remain vital parts of their towns to this day. The Ladies' Rest Room was more short-lived, due not to its insignificance in the lives of Warsaw women in the first quarter of the twentieth century, but rather to the changing needs of a community. As transportation became more accessible and larger numbers of women entered the workforce, the need for such a facility declined.

Regardless, the work of all three clubs illustrates members' devotion to the well-being of their neighbors, their willingness to search for solutions to their communities' problems, and their ability to combine their strengths with those of other members of the community to accomplish a task. The efforts of these three clubs truly made a lasting impact on their respective communities.

CONCLUSION

The small-town Indiana clubwoman followed the trends established by urban clubs elsewhere, but adapted them to her own unique environment. By the 1880s, numerous women's clubs had formed in the United States, providing the charter members of the Zerelda Reading Club, the Ladies' Piano Club, and the Florentine Club with a plethora of models to follow. Clubs typically shared constitutions, by-laws, and programs. As a result, few clubs organized without the aid of an extant group. Additional aid most likely came from men's organizations, husbands and fathers practicing as attorneys, and manuals like *Robert's Rules of Order* and the *Woman's Manual of Parliamentary Procedure*. Ultimately, women's clubs had access to an even more highly recognized model in the Constitution of the United States. This document, along with the manuals and other models, taught clubwomen that they could gain legitimacy through careful attention to such precedents.

In the end, the relevance of such models for this study is not in clubwomen's use of them, but rather in their careful tailoring of these models to suit their own circumstances. Changes provide intimate details of members' interests, desires, and problems and offer valuable hints regarding how club activity functioned in the daily lives of members. The Zerelda Reading Club frequently made changes to its constitution and by-laws, often regarding punishments for tardy or absent members, or for those who failed to turn in their assigned work. The Ladies' Piano Club similarly revised its constitution to include fines for members who failed to have their assigned work at a meeting, and the Florentine Club made several revisions regarding tardy members. These

examples illustrate the seriousness with which present, prepared members viewed their activity. The choice of a club name and topics of study likewise attest to the individual taste and interests of a particular club. The founders of the Zerelda Reading Club chose to name their organization after Zerelda Wallace, a leader in Indiana's temperance and suffrage movements, illustrating their approval of these reform activities. Florentine Club members named themselves after Florence, Italy, in admiration of the great art and artists produced there during the Renaissance. The Ladies' Piano Club derived its name from their instrument of choice. In selecting topics of study, the Zerelda Reading Club chose a wide variety of topics, from literature to current events, biography, and local concerns. The Ladies' Piano Club and Florentine Clubs had a much more narrow focus, studying mostly European musicians and the art of old masters, respectively.

Membership patterns indicate a wide variety of ages and marital status among members of the three clubs, suggesting that small-town Indiana study clubs were welcoming to women of different backgrounds. Perhaps as a result of a lack of interested women, these clubs did not limit their membership strictly to career women, as the famous New England Women's Club did, or to reformers, following the example of Sorosis. Membership also was not limited to middle-aged housewives, as was often the case in examples cited in prior histories. Instead, especially in the Zerelda Reading Club, membership included women both young and old, married and single, mothers and those without children, wives of prominent businessmen and women of less distinguished backgrounds. The Ladies' Piano Club and Florentine Club, at least at first, showed less variation in membership, and tended to attract young, unmarried women. The Ladies' Piano Club would later include a fairly large number of married members. All three

clubs were made up mostly of friends, relatives, and wives of business associates of husbands and fathers. These commonalities ensured a level of compatibility among the members, and help to explain why bonds grew so quickly among the clubwomen.

This study of three Indiana women's clubs offers several key indicators of the important role that club activity played in the lives of members. A close reading of the documents of the Zerelda Reading, Ladies' Piano, and Florentine clubs proves that the clubs not only gave women a pastime, improved their education, musical ability, and skill as art critics, but also offered advantages to small towns seeking to improve their status as the world around them urbanized. The heyday of club activity in Indiana occurred simultaneously with the state's transformation from a mostly rural environment to an increasingly urban one. Club activity thus represented one of the key benchmarks of urban life: cultural refinement. Women's clubs, through their absorption of literature, music, and art, and later through their sharing of culture with the entire community, brought urban advantages to their towns. While few surviving recollections and statements of sentiment exist to prove the advantages and kinship felt by members of the Zerelda Reading Club, Ladies' Piano Club, and Florentine Club, perhaps an even better statement of their importance lies in the longevity of each club. The Florentine Club finally disbanded in 2003, and the Zerelda Reading Club in the 1990s. The last records of the Ladies' Piano Club housed at the Stevens Museum end in 1938, indicating that the club continued at least that long.

As instruments of civic reform, members of the three clubs had a lasting impact on the civic and cultural institutions of their day. The women's rest room diligently pursued by members of the Zerelda Reading Club serviced rural women from throughout

the county, who otherwise had no place to stay when accompanying their husbands to town. It also functioned as an important gathering space for the town's women, as they continued to pursue civic improvement work. The public library erected with the help of members of the Ladies' Piano Club offered reading materials to the town's adults and children, and continues to serve its original purpose over one hundred years later in 2008. The work of the Florentine Club in cemetery improvements inspired Lebanon residents to continue beautification efforts, and secured the Oak Hill Cemetery as a lasting resting place for the community's residents. These efforts impacted the entire towns of Warsaw, Salem, and Lebanon by contributing to their spirit of improvement and growth. Each club acted as a force in community culture, one of lasting impact.

Thus, the three clubs under consideration became important forces in the lives of individual members as vehicles of self-help and friendship, but also became vital forces in the community by taking active roles in civic improvement endeavors. While the women's clubs that have been previously studied by historians achieved similar goals of individual improvement and participated in similar community betterment projects, this study illustrates several important deviations worthy of note. In Indiana's history, the woman's club is particularly important, and yet has received little serious attention by state historians. Indiana women's clubs clearly played a significant role in the cultural development of growing small towns as they sought to emulate larger urban areas. Clubwomen spearheaded many community institutions, like libraries, women's rest rooms, and playgrounds, that aided Indiana in acquiring the urban advantages already enjoyed by residents of other states. Women's clubs also played vital roles in shaping the

daily lives of a large proportion of the state's female residents, providing them with friendships, education, and worthwhile activity outside of home care and child rearing.

In the history of women's clubs, Warsaw, Salem, and Lebanon have much to offer. As Stacey Horstmann Gatti illustrated in her study of a rural New York woman's club, small town women's clubs deviated from the urban and national clubwomen defined in the histories written by Karen Blair, Anne Gere, Theodora Martin, and Anne Scott. In the case of the Setauket Library Club, these changes involved a disinterest in taking on progressive reforms. While the women read about these activities in the newspaper, they decided not to participate. After 1920, when they finally began to aid in reform activities, they chose causes of unique importance to their own personal situations, rather than working for more widespread efforts. This study indicates that small town Indiana women's clubs have more in common with Gatti's Setauket Library Club than with the urban clubs studied by Gere, Scott, Martin, and Blair. The Zerelda Reading Club, Ladies' Piano Club, and Florentine Club all studied progressive reforms being undertaken by the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the Indiana Federation of Clubs, and women of other affiliations. However, while they sometimes gave modest monetary aid to these causes, they chose to participate actively only in local endeavors. However, unlike the Setauket Library Club (organized 1896), these activities occurred as early as the turn of the century. What is perhaps most interesting is that even though members of the three clubs were participating in improvement activities, they did not fashion themselves with the same spirit of feminism characteristic of the urban progressive woman. All three clubs channeled their improvements through accepted community organizations, ones with male and female memberships. While other clubs throughout the nation sometimes

pursued similar avenues of reform, the General Federation of Women's Clubs, typically considered by historians to be the most inclusive example of clubwomen's civic improvement and municipal housekeeping activity, utilized cooperative partnerships to their own advantage. The clubwomen in the Zerelda Reading Club, Ladies' Piano Club, and Florentine Club, however, took on improvement work as helpers, working cautiously through the channels of male leadership. For example, Warsaw's men inaugurated the women's civic group that eventually undertook the women's rest room, but in their first year of existence they worked only on projects suggested by male community leaders. The Salem library began as the idea of the Fortnightly Club, but quickly became a project led by a number of the city's men. Lebanon's Cemetery Association was comprised of both men and women, with the women's federation taking on only a small part of the project by raising money for an arch. All of these endeavors show a spirit of community cooperation between men and women, regardless of affiliations.

There is, then, merit in continuing to look at women's club activity, especially clubs yet to be studied in smaller towns and rural communities. Further research will likely provide even more variations to the national standard set by urban women's clubs and examined by prior historians. Future studies will bring a better understanding of the impact that less prominent clubwomen had on their own communities. This will be especially significant for states like Indiana, where the majority of clubs existed in small towns and rural communities rather than big cities. Whereas this study has only begun to shed light on the experiences and effects of the small-town Indiana clubwoman, a larger-scale study of Indiana women's clubs would provide answers to even bigger questions. For instance, did geography play a role in clubwomen's ideals or activities? Was the

community spirit of cooperation and male leadership found in the Zerelda Reading Club, Ladies' Piano Club, and Florentine Club unique to Indiana or midwestern small communities, or did a similar scenario of civic improvement hierarchy exist in other rural parts of the country?

This study has illustrated the importance of individual circumstances and community needs in influencing the development of clubwomen's activities in Warsaw, Salem, and Lebanon, Indiana. These circumstances resulted in the organization of women's clubs that prospered under the guidance of extant clubs, but served their members and their communities by adapting their activity to suit their own local needs.

APPENDIX

Chart A: Characteristics of Charter Members of the Zerelda Reading Club
February 17, 1886

	MARRIED?	CHILDREN	HUSBAND / FATHER'S OCCUPATION	AGE IN 1886	FAMILY CONNECTIONS	ADDRESS	RELIGION
Emma Haymond	Yes	Henry, 21; Mabel, 16; Lula, 18; Norman, 10	(H) Edgar, city attorney, Director of State Bank of Warsaw; later judge of circuit court	42		27 N. Buffalo (Corner Buffalo and Main)	
Victoria Beck Moon	Yes Married 25 March 1874	Leolin, 25; Fred, 23; Bell, 21; Charley, 19	(H) Edward, grocer, former business partner of Hudson Beck and John Trish, former county treasurer	43	Mary Binns (sister)	SW Corner Buffalo & South	Christian Church
Barbary Brown	Yes	William, 27; Emma, 21; Minnie, 17; Jennie, 15	(H) John, farmer	47		189 Fort Wayne	
Mattie Thayer [Hendee]	No Married 8 April 1886	No Marie b. 1889, John b. 1891	After March 1886 - (H) Edgar, attorney	22	Sarah Thayer (mother)	271 E. Center	Presbyterian
Jennie Ripple	Yes	William, 23; George, 16; Mattie, 13; Edwin, 10	(H) Lewis, farmer, later sheriff	43		83 S. Indiana (in 1889)	Baptist
Sarah Graves [Chapman]	Widow Remarries 28 April 1886	Step-sons, James, 23; Charles, 39	(H), deceased, William Graves, banker; Later (H), George W. Chapman., real estate	44		285 E. Center (in 1889)	
Mary Binns	Yes	No	(H) William; (F) Metcalfe Beck, merchant	48	Victoria Moon (sister)	59 S. Indiana	Presbyterian
Sarah Thayer	Yes	Mattie, 22; Jessie, 19; Henry, 17; Mary, 9	(H) John D, Grain Dealer	42	Mattie Thayer (daughter)	271 E. Center	Presbyterian

Sources³¹⁶

³¹⁶ Zerelda Reading Club Membership List, Zerelda Reading Club Records, Old Jail Museum, Kosciusko County Historical Society, Warsaw, Indiana. **Sarah Thayer** – Manuscript Census, Town of Warsaw, Kosciusko County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population, 1880, in National Archives Microfilm Publication T9, Roll 290, Enumeration District 62, page 13, hereafter referred to as 1880 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 62, page 13; *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*; *Progressive Men and Women of Kosciusko County, Indiana* (Logansport, Indiana: B.F. Bowen, 1902), 225-228; "Married Hendee-Thayer," *Indianian Republican*, 8 April 1886. **Barbara Brown** – 1880 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 62, page 5; *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*. **Jennie V. Ripple** – 1880 Census, Town of

Chart B: Biographical Information of Zerelda Club Members 1886-1890

	DATE ENROLLED	MARRIED	CHILDREN	HUSBAND / FATHER'S OCCUPATION	AGE	ADDRESS	OTHER
Catharine Woods	24 February 1886	Yes		(H) Thomas, Deputy Clerk	53	N.E. Corner High and Market	
Mary Beck	3 March 1886	Yes Married 11 March 1863	Albion, 23; Clara, 20	(H) Hudson, owned general store, later president Lake City Bank; (F) principal Warsaw schools	44	102 Ft. Wayne	Member Methodist Episcopal or Christian Church Relations: Clara Beck Funk (daughter), Victoria Moon (sister-in-law), Mary Binns (sister-in-law)
Jennie Blackford	10 March 1886						
Lucretia Jaques	17 March 1886	Yes	Edward, 18; Carrie, 8	(H) Oliver P., ice dealer, real estate, sheriff	41	145 E. Center	Member Christian Church Relations: Carrie Jaques (daughter)
Jennie Porter	17 March 1886						
Julia Trish	14 April 1886	Yes	John, 34; Henrietta, 28; Frederick, 29	(H) Lewis, wagon maker at Trish Brothers	54	N.W. Corner Washington and Center	

Warsaw, ED 61, page 32; *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*; "Mr. Lewis Ripple," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 30 April 1900. **Sarah Graves Chapman** – Manuscript Census, Town of Warsaw, Kosciusko County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population, 1900, in National Archives Microfilm Publication T623, Roll 382, Enumeration District 65, page 12B, hereafter referred to as 1900 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 65, page 12B; 1880 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 62, page 1; *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*. **Mary Binns** – Manuscript Census, Town of Warsaw, Kosciusko County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population, 1870, in National Archives Microfilm Publication M593, Roll 332, page 17, hereafter referred to as 1870 Census, Town of Warsaw, page 17; 1900 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 66, page 5A; *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*; *Progressive Men and Women of Kosciusko County*, 258-260. **Emma Haymond** – 1880 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 62, page 15; 1900 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 65, page 7; *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*; "Judge Edgar Haymond Passed Away Saturday Morning," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 13 October 1917. **Victoria Moon** – 1880 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 63, page 16; 1900 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 66, page 2A; *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory 1888-1889*; *Progressive Men and Women of Kosciusko County*, 308-9. **Mattie Hendee** – "Married Hendee-Thayer," *Indianian Republican*, 8 April 1886; 1900 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 83, page 9A.

	DATE ENROLLED	MARRIED	CHILDREN	HUSBAND / FATHER'S OCCUPATION	AGE	ADDRESS	OTHER
Nancy Bitner	15 June 1886	Yes Married 1864	Dan, 20; Jenny, 17; Regina, 16	(H) Daniel S., grocer, formerly telegraph operator, later revenue collector (F) George Moon, formerly clerk of Metcalf Beck, IRS Collector	43	110 W. Water	Relations: Victoria Moon (sister-in- law); Regina Bowser (daughter)
Rose Comstock	29 June 1886	Yes	Charles, 12; Mattie, 7; Blanche, 6	(H) Henry, Comstock Brothers Grocery, county treasurer	34	45 S. High	
Isabella Troutman	7 July 1886						
Etta Wilkie	27 July 1886						
Kate Hopler	25 August 1886						
Fannie Ridgly	19 September 1886						
Trella Wood Brubaker	28 September 1886	Yes Married 30 January 1883	No Robert b. 1890, Lawrence b. 1893	(F) A. Wood, attorney (H) Abe, bank cashier, loan agent, and abstractor with John Brubaker	28		Relations: Hattie Brubaker (sister-in- law)
Mamie Conrad	19 September 1886	Yes	Rosa, 25 (step- daughter); Earl, 7; Rulo, 6	(H) William, wagon maker, foreman Fire Protection Co. No. 1	32	S.W. Corner of High and Center	Relations: Rose Hetrick (step- daughter); Sue Conrad (sister-in- law)
Mae Calvert Baker	20 October 1886	Yes Married 23 December 1885		(H), Henry			
Rose Hetrick	8 December 1886	Yes		(H) Frank M., carriage trimmer at Conrad, insurance agent, later gasworks manager	25	10 E. Center	Relations: Mamie Conrad (step- mother); Sue Conrad (aunt)
Mamie Schultz	26 January 1887						
Ida Weaver	2 February 1887						

	DATE ENROLLED	MARRIED	CHILDREN	HUSBAND / FATHER'S OCCUPATION	AGE	ADDRESS	OTHER
Clara Beck Funk	2 March 1887	Yes Married January 1886	No Agnes and Mary both born between 1887 and 1890	(H) Wilbur	22		Relations: Mary Beck (mother); Victoria Moon (aunt); Mary Binns (aunt); Salome Funk (mother-in- law); Ora Funk (sister- in-law)
Kate Ale	23 March 1887	Yes	Mary, 17; Alfred, 13; Edith, 10	(H) Alfred, life insurance agent, formerly cabinet maker	43	119 N. Lake	
Sarah Chipman	23 March 1887	Yes Married 18 April 1867	Helen, 8; Walter, 16; Antoinette, 11	(H) Silas W., dry goods, president State Bank	45	E. Fort Wayne St.	Member: Presbyterian Church
Minerva McDonald	20 April 1887						
Lucinda Erwin	23 April 1887						
Susan Erwin	20 April 1887						
Eliza Webber	15 June 1887	Yes	Erva, 10	(H) Selden, hardware merchant	42	33 S. Lake	Relations: Erva Webber (daughter)
Hattie Brubaker	3 August 1887	Yes	Arthur, 10; Walter, 8	(H) John H., attorney	33		Relations: Trella Brubaker (sister-in- law)
Etta Stewart	31 August 1887						
Vie Granger	26 October 1887						
Kitty Reynolds Lash	14 December 1887	Yes Married 3 November 1887		(H) George, clerk at Globe (F) Charles, druggist	22	60 N. Buffalo	
Jennie Weaver	8 February 1888						
Florence Funk	7 March 1888	Yes	Charles, 21; Elmer, 10; Regina, 7	(H) William B., dry goods and carpet merchant, county treasurer and auditor, president of Lake City Bank	34	N. W. Corner of Main and Washington	Member: Methodist Relations: Salome Funk (sister-in- law)
Jennie Erwin	8 February 1888						
Frances Hall	13 March 1888	No		(F) S. Hall, farmer	24		

	DATE ENROLLED	MARRIED	CHILDREN	HUSBAND / FATHER'S OCCUPATION	AGE	ADDRESS	OTHER
Bell Royce	13 March 1888						
Ora [Orilla] Funk	4 April 1888	Yes Married 24 July 1884	Joseph, infant; Helen born 1889	(H) Merlin	24	Live with Salome Funk	Relations: Salome Funk (mother-in- law); Clara Funk (sister- in-law)
Regina Bitner [Bowser]	13 June 1888	No Married Francis Bowser later		Later (H) Francis, Attorney, later judge	18	110 W. Water; later E. Center	Relations: Nancy Bitner (mother); Victoria Moon (aunt)
Mattie Wood	27 June 1888	No Married William H. Pavey later		(F) William D. Wood, clerk of Kosciusko County, later insurance agent (H) William H. Pavey, preacher	18	53 S. Indiana	
Mattie Ripple	14 September 1888	No		(F) Lewis, farmer and sheriff	15	83 S. Indiana	Member: Baptist Relations: Jennie Ripple (mother)
Sue Conrad	14 September 1888	Yes	Franklin, 24; Lena, 15	(F) Peter, wagon maker	46	Pierceton	Relations: Mamie Conrad (sister-in- law); Rose Hetrick (niece)
Erba Webber	14 September 1888	No		(F) Selden, hardware merchant	12	33 S. Lake	Relations: Eliza Webber (mother)
Mabel Haymond Stephenson	24 October 1888	No Married George Stephenson, 1 November 1894		(F) Edgar Haymond, Attorney; later (H) George Stephenson	18	27 N. Buffalo	Relations: Emma Haymond (mother)
Carrie Jaques	14 November 1888	No		(F) Oliver P., ice dealer, real estate, sheriff	10	145 E. Center	Member: Presbyterian Church Relations: Lucretia Jaques (mother)
Amelia Kester	1890						
Emma Butler	1890						
Bertha Sweeney	1890						
Emma Woods	1890						
Cora Chapman	1890						
Emily Baker	1890	Yes	Gerow, 7; Edgar, 5	(H), Oscar, salesman	29		

	DATE ENROLLED	MARRIED	CHILDREN	HUSBAND / FATHER'S OCCUPATION	AGE	ADDRESS	OTHER
Mary Cosgrove	1890	No	No	She is a school teacher	28		
Salome Funk	????	Yes Married 23 August 1853	Merlin, 31; Wilber, 28	(H) Joseph A., dry goods	53	Market St., later 27 S. Indiana	Relations: Florence Funk (sister- in-law); Clara Funk (daughter-in- law); Ora Funk (daughter-in- law); Mamie Conrad (neighbor)
Mattie Comstock	1890				11		Relations: Rose Comstock (mother)
Kate Brubaker	1890	Yes Married between 1889-1890	Arthur, 14; Walter, 11; Howard, 6; Maurice, 3	(H) John H., attorney	35		Relations: Trella Brubaker (sister-in- law)
Mary Ale	1890				20		Relations: Kate Ale (mother)
Jessie Thayer	1890				23		Relations: Sarah Thayer (mother)

Sources³¹⁷

³¹⁷ Zerelda Reading Club Membership List. **Catharine A. Woods** – 1870 Census, Town of Warsaw, page 25; *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*. **Mary A. Beck** – 1880 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 62, page 7; 1900 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 65, page 9A; *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*; *Progressive Men and Women of Kosciusko County*, 327-8. **Lucretia Jaques** – 1880 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 62, page 9; 1900 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 66, page 12A; "O.P. Jaques Laid At Rest," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 15 February 1907; *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*. **Julia Trish** – *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*; Manuscript Census, Town of Warsaw, Kosciusko County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population, 1860, in National Archives Microfilm Publication M653, Roll 273, page 125, hereafter referred to as 1860 Census, Town of Warsaw, page 125. **Eliza Webber** – 1880 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 63, page 19; *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*. **Mamie Conrad** – "William Conrad, Old Resident of City, Is Claimed by Death," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 6 November 1917; *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*; 1880 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 63, page 10. **Mae Calvert Baker** – Ruth M. Slevin, *Kosciusko County, Indiana Marriages 1846-1891* (Privately printed, 1972). **Rose C. Hetrick** – 1900 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 66, page 6A; *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*. **Nancy Bitner** – *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*; 1880 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 63, page 13; "D.S. Bitner is Dead," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 25 January 1911; "Mrs. Daniel S. Bitner Dead," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 5 June 1912; *Progressive Men and Women of Kosciusko County*, 246-9. **Rose, Mattie Comstock** – 1900 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 66, page 6B; 1880 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 62, page 30; *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*. **Clara Funk** – "Death of Mrs. Will Funk," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 5 June 1912; *Progressive Men and Women of Kosciusko County*, 328. **Sarah M. Chipman** – 1880 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 62, page 6; *Progressive Men and Women of Kosciusko County*, 223-5; "Mrs. S. W. Chipman Passes Away," *Warsaw Daily Union*, 30 December 1911. **Kittie Lash** – "Married Lash-Reynolds," *Indianian Republican*, 3 November 1887; *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*; 1880 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 47, page 3C. **Mabel Haymond** – 1880 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 62, page 15; *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*; "Married Stephenson-Haymond," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 2 November 1894. **Salome Funk** – *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*; 1900 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 66, page 4B; 1880 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 63, page 10; "Mrs. Joseph Funk Passes Away," *Warsaw Daily Times*,

25 January 1913. **Carrie Jaques** – "Caroline M. Jaques Rites Held Wednesday," *North Manchester News Journal*, 5 January 1967; 1880 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 62, page 9. **Hattie Brubaker** – 1880 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 59, page 11; Zerelda Club Minutes, 10 May 1889. **Kate, Mary Ale** – 1880 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 0, page 1; *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*. **Mattie Ripple** – *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*; See also Jennie Ripple. **Erba Webber** – *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*; See also Eliza Webber. **Sue Conrad** – 1880 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 0, page 14. **Ora Funk** – 1900 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 66, page 15A. **Mattie Wood** – 1900 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 66, page 4B; *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*. **Florence Funk** – "One of Warsaw's Prize Citizens Celebrates 82nd Anniversary Today," *Warsaw Times Union*, 20 January 1958; 1880 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 62, page 23; *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*. **Trella Brubaker** – 1900 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 67, page 8A; *Progressive Men and Women of Kosciusko County*, 304-5; *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*. **Frances Hall** – 1880 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 46, page 55. **Regina Bitner Bowser** – 1900 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 66, page 12A; *H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889*. **Emily Baker** – 1900 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 65, page 12B. **Mary Cosgrove** – 1880 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 63, page 13. **Kate (Catharine) Brubaker** – 1900 Census, Town of Warsaw, ED 65, page 8A. For Jessie Thayer, see Sarah Thayer.

Chart C: Characteristics of Charter Members of the Florentine Club
1900

	MARRIED	CHILDREN	HUSBAND, FATHER, SELF OCCUPATION	AGE IN 1900	ADDRESS	OTHER
Helen Caldwell	No		(F) D. E. Caldwell, publisher/editor.	32	106 E. Washington	Relations: Mary Harrison (cousin) Raised by uncle, Robert Harrison, attorney
Iva A. Flanigan	No		(S) Stenographer, S. M. Ralston (F) Joseph, farmer	21	224 Park	Delegate to City Federation of Clubs with Mary Harrison and Bertha Martin
Mary Louise Harrison Shireman	No Married Eugene C. Shireman, 30 July 1902		(F) Robert, attorney	26 or 28	106 E. Washington	Relations: Helen Caldwell (cousin); Member of University Extension Club with Bertha Martin Delegate to City Federation of Clubs with Iva Flanigan and Bertha Martin
Byrnia / Byrnice Smith	No		(S) Teacher at Central Building (F) Carter H., physician	32	303 S. Meridian	Relations: taught school with Lydia Bell, Bertha Martin, Daisy Tipton, and Rose Sims; Neighbor of Perkins family
Bertha Perkins	No		(F) Ira S., Rice & Perkins transfer line, truant officer	24	217 S. Meridian	Relations: Esther and Ruth Perkins (sisters)
Ruth Perkins	No		(F) Ira S., Rice & Perkins transfer line, truant officer	18	217 S. Meridian	Relations: Gertrude Hardy (classmate); Esther and Bertha Perkins (sisters)

	MARRIED	CHILDREN	HUSBAND, FATHER, SELF OCCUPATION	AGE IN 1900	ADDRESS	OTHER
Esther Perkins	No Married Thomas F. Graham, 31 August 1918		(F) Ira S., Rice & Perkins transfer line, truant officer	21	217 S. Meridian	Relations: Ruth and Bertha Perkins (sisters)
Gertrude Carroll Parkhurst	Yes Married Layton M. Parkhurst, 19 July 1898	No Daughter Catherine b. 1900	(H) Layton, pharmacist (S) Later, teacher	24	409 E. Washington St.	Member of Presbyterian Church
Alice Hogshire	No Married Joseph A. Coons October 1, 1902		(F) William R. (deceased), formerly farmer	29	513 E. Pearl	Member of Christian Church Relations: Kate Hogshire (sister)
Kate Hogshire	No Married George T. Watts August 7, 1902		(F) William R. (deceased), formerly farmer	27	513 E. Pearl	Relations: Alice Hogshire (sister)
Bertha Martin	No Married Rev. P. L. Powell, August 7, 1901		(S) Teacher (F) Dr. Thomas H. Martin (dentist) Later (H), P. L. Powell, minister	25	324 S. East St.	Member of Baptist Church Relations: taught school with Lydia Bell, Rose Sims, Daisy Tipton, and Bymia Smith.; member of University Extension Club with Mary Harrison Delegate to City Federation of Clubs with Mary Harrison and Iva Flanigan
Hattie Cochran	No		(S) high school teacher (F) Alexander, school teacher	31		

	MARRIED	CHILDREN	HUSBAND, FATHER, SELF OCCUPATION	AGE IN 1900	ADDRESS	OTHER
Daisy Tipton	No		(S) teacher central building (F) William A., lawyer	24	312 S. East	Relations: taught school with Lydia Bell, Rose Sims, Byrnia Smith, and Bertha Martin

Sources³¹⁸

³¹⁸ Florentine Club Membership List, Florentine Club Records, Cragun House, Boone County Historical Society, Lebanon, Indiana. **Helen Caldwell** – *Lebanon Directory, 1900-1901*; Manuscript Census, Town of Lebanon, Boone County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population, 1870, in National Archives Microfilm Publication M593, Roll 300, page 12, hereafter referred to as 1870 Census, Town of Lebanon, page 12; Manuscript Census, Town of Lebanon, Boone County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population, 1880, in National Archives Microfilm Publication T9, Roll 266, Enumeration District 8, page 45, hereafter referred to as 1880 Census, Town of Lebanon, ED 8, page 45; Manuscript Census, Town of Lebanon, Boone County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population, 1900, in National Archives Microfilm Publication T623, Roll 360, Enumeration District 5, page 4A, hereafter referred to as 1900 Census, Town of Lebanon, ED 5, page 4A; Manuscript Census, Town of Lebanon, Boone County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population, 1920, in National Archives Microfilm Publication T625, Roll 423, Enumeration District 7, page 3A, hereafter referred to as 1920 Census, Town of Lebanon, ED 7, page 3A; Manuscript Census, Town of Lebanon, Boone County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population, 1930, in National Archives Microfilm Publication T626, Roll 578, Enumeration District 4, page 14B, hereafter referred to as 1930 Census, Town of Lebanon, ED 4, page 14B. **Iva Flanigan** – *Lebanon Directory, 1900-1901*; 1880 Census, Town of Lebanon, ED 116, page 11. **Mary Louise Harrison** – *Lebanon Directory, 1900-1901*; 1900 Census, Town of Lebanon, ED 5, page 4A; 1880 Census, Town of Lebanon, ED 8, page 45; Works Progress Administration, *Morgan County, Indiana, Index to Marriage Record 1850 to 1920*, Book C-5, page 553. **Byrnia Smith** – "Lebanon Teachers. List of Those Elected for Next Year Some Resignations Filed," *Lebanon Pioneer*, 18 May 1899; *Lebanon Directory, 1900-1901*; 1900 Census, Town of Lebanon, ED 7, page 1A. **Bertha, Esther, and Ruth Perkins** – "Class of Ninety-Six Six Lassies and Three Lads Complete the High School Course," *Lebanon Pioneer*, 7 May 1896; *Lebanon Directory, 1900-1901*; 1900 Census, Town of Lebanon, ED 7, page 1A; "Nineteen Finish The Course of Study in the Lebanon High School," *Lebanon Pioneer*, 11 May 1899; Works Progress Administration, *Boone County, Indiana, Index to Marriage Record 1844 – 1920*, Book C-18, page 238. **Gertrude Parkhurst** – "Mrs. Gertrude Parkhurst," *Lebanon Pioneer*, 10 October 1912; "Parkhurst-Carroll," *Lebanon Pioneer*, 20 July 1899; *Lebanon Directory, 1900-1901*; Manuscript Census, Town of Lebanon, Boone County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population, 1910, in National Archives Microfilm Publication T624, Roll 342, Enumeration District 7, page 4B, hereafter referred to as 1910 Census, Town of Lebanon, ED 7, page 4B; Works Progress Administration, *Index to Birth Records, Indiana, 1882-1920*. **Alice and Katharine Hogshire** – "Coons-Hogshire Marriage of a Well-known Lebanon Couple Yesterday Afternoon," *Lebanon Patriot*, 2 October 1902; *Lebanon Directory, 1900-1901*; 1880 Census, Town of Lebanon, ED 119, page 23; "Graduating Exercises," *Lebanon Pioneer*, 28 April 1892; Works Progress Administration, *Boone County, Indiana, Index to Marriage Records 1844 – 1920*, Book C-12, page 462. **Bertha Martin** – "Powell-Martin Marriage of Two Estimable Young People Yesterday Afternoon," *Lebanon Patriot*, 8 August 1901; "Lebanon Teachers. List of Those Elected for Next Year Some Resignations Filed," *Lebanon Pioneer*, 18 May 1899; *Lebanon Directory, 1900-1901*; 1900 Census, Town of Lebanon, ED 7, page 3A. **Hattie Cochran** – "Lebanon Teachers. List of Those Elected for Next Year Some Resignations Filed," *Lebanon Pioneer*, 18 May 1899; 1880 Census, Town of Lebanon, ED 119, page 10. **Daisy Tipton** – "Lebanon Teachers. List of Those Elected for Next Year Some Resignations Filed," *Lebanon Pioneer*, 18 May 1899; *Lebanon Directory, 1900-1901*; 1900 Census, Town of Lebanon, ED 7, page 2B.

Chart D: Biographical Information of Florentine Club Members, 1900-1904

	DATE ENROLLED	MARRIED	CHILDREN	HUSBAND, FATHER, SELF OCCUPATION	AGE WHEN ENROLLED	ADDRESS	OTHER
Lucy Nichols	1901	No	No				
Leah Cory	1901	No Married Guy Voris, 17 April 1902	No		24		Member of Presbyterian Church Brother Fred taught school with Hattie Cochran
Gertrude Neal	1901	No	No	(S) Teacher	19	414 E. Pearl	Relations: Sister- in-law of George Hogshire, brother of Kate and Alice Hogshire
Lydia Bell	1901	No	No	(F) William Bell, farmer		524 N. Meridian	
Gertrude Hardy Kinert	1901	No Married Eugene Kinert, 27 December 1905	No	(F) Dr. John S., physician	19	116 ½ S. Meridian	Member of M.E. Church
Hannah Bell	1902-1903	No	No	(S) Music teacher (F) William Bell, farmer	23	524 N. Meridian	Relations: Lydia Bell (sister), Esther Perkins (classmate)
Mae Gabriel	1902-1903	No Married Elmer A. Williams, 31 August 1909	No				
Edith Sims	1903-1904	No Married Frank Patterson, 23 October 1906	No	(S) Teacher (F) Wright	20	322 E. Pearl St.	Relations: Edith Sims (classmate); Possibly taught with Lydia Bell, Rose Sims, Daisy Tipton, and Byrnia Smith
Grace Neal	1903-1904	No	No	(F) Charles, Real Estate	20	504 W. North	Relations: Edith Sims (classmate)

	DATE ENROLLED	MARRIED	CHILDREN	HUSBAND, FATHER, SELF OCCUPATION	AGE WHEN ENROLLED	ADDRESS	OTHER
Jennie Pugh	1904-1905						
Anna Ross	1904-1905	No	No	(F) Arland, farmer	25		

Sources³¹⁹

³¹⁹ Florentine Club Membership List. **Gertrude Hardy Kinert** – "Nineteen Finish The Course of Study in the Lebanon High School," *Lebanon Pioneer*, 11 May 1899; "Kinnert-Hardy Nuptials," *Lebanon Patriot*, 28 December 1905. **Leah Cory** – "Thirteen Graduate Annual Commencement Exercises of the Lebanon School," *Lebanon Pioneer*, 16 May 1895; "Voris-Cory Marriage," *Lebanon Patriot*, 17 April 1902. **Lydia Bell** – *Lebanon Directory 1900-1901*. **Mae Gabriel** – Works Progress Administration, *Boone County, Indiana Index to Marriage Records, 1844-1820*, vol. C-15, page 155. **Edith Sims** – 1900 Census, Town of Lebanon, ED 7, Page 13B; "Class Personnel Brief Sketches of Those Who Received Diplomas Last Friday," *Lebanon Patriot*, 9 May 1901; *Lebanon Directory 1900-1901*; "Nuptial Knot Tied Well Known Young People Take Sacred Vows Will Reside in Warsaw," *Lebanon Patriot*, 25 October 1906. **Grace Neal** – 1900 Census, Town of Lebanon, ED 5, page 8A; *Lebanon Directory 1900-1901*; "Class Personnel Brief Sketches of Those Who Received Diplomas Last Friday," *Lebanon Patriot*, 9 May 1901. **Anna Ross** – 1900 Census, Town of Lebanon, ED 11, page 13A. **Gertrude Neal** – *Lebanon Directory 1900-1901*; 1900 Census, Town of Lebanon, ED 7, page 13B. **Hannah Bell** – *Lebanon Directory 1900-1901*.

Chart E: Characteristics of Charter Members of the Ladies' Piano Club, 1896

	MARRIED	CHILDREN	HUSBAND, FATHER, SELF OCCUPATION	AGE IN 1896	ADDRESS	OTHER
Mattie [Martha] Tucker Morris	No Married Harvey Morris, 4 September 1901	No	(S) Music teacher (H) Harvey Morris, attorney with Morris & Hottel (F) Benjamin (deceased)	28		Member of Quaker church
Minnie Martin	No	No	(S) Music teacher (F) Absalom, bookkeeper	44		
Nell Bare	No	No	(F) John, physician	24		
Cora De Pew	No	No	(F) Hiram A., contracting carpenter	28		
Carrie St. John	No	No	(S) Music teacher (F) Irving, minister	24		
Edith Attkisson Rudder	No Married William Rudder, 26 October 1898	One child dies July 1899 Stephen b. 12 May 1906	(H) William Rudder, druggist; served on State Board of Pharmacy May 1907-May 1915 (F) Stephen Attkisson, conductor for Pullman in Salem	25		Member of Weir Memorial Church (Methodist)
Kate Williams Williams	No Married William Williams, 15 June 1902	No	Teacher	29		

Sources³²⁰

³²⁰ Ladies' Piano Club Membership List, Ladies' Piano Club Records, Stevens Museum, Washington County Historical Society, Salem, Indiana. **Mattie Tucker Morris** – Works Progress Administration, *Washington County, Indiana Index to Marriage Records 1850-1920*, Book M, p. 29; "Morris-Tucker," *Salem Republican Leader*, 6 Sep 1901; Manuscript Census, Town of Salem, Washington County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population, 1910, in National Archives Microfilm Publication T624, Roll 387, Enumeration District 164, page 22B, hereafter referred to as 1910 Census, Town of Salem, ED 164, page 22B; Manuscript Census, Town of Salem, Washington County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population, 1880, in National Archives Microfilm Publication T9, Roll 321, Enumeration District 186, page 2, hereafter referred to as 1880 Census, Town of Salem, ED 186, page 2; 1920 Census, Town of Salem, ED 195, page 1A; Warder W. Stevens, *Centennial History of Washington County, Indiana: Its People, Industries and Institutions with Biographical Sketches of Representative Citizens and Genealogical Records of Many of the Old Families* (Indianapolis: B.F. Bowen, 1916), 1030-1. **Minnie Martin** – Manuscript Census, Town of Salem, Washington County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population, 1900, in National Archives Microfilm Publication T623, Roll 412, Enumeration District 142, page 3A, hereafter referred to as 1900 Census, Town of Salem, ED 142, page 3A; 1880 Census, Town of Salem, ED 186, page 22. **Nell Bare** – Manuscript Census, Town of Salem, Washington County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population, 1870, in

Chart F: Biographical Details of Members of the Ladies' Piano Club, 1896-1900

	DATE ENROLLED	MARRIED	CHILDREN	HUSBAND, FATHER, SELF OCCUPATION	AGE WHEN ENROLLED	ADDRESS	OTHER
Daisy Attkisson	1898	No		(S) Milliner (F) Steven	23		Relations: Edith Attkisson (sister)
Daisy Hoggatt	1898	No Married William Robinson 10 November 1906	No Carl b. 8 July 1909	(S) Music Teacher (F) Mahlin, physician	19		
Minnie F. Lambdin	June 1897	Yes Married John Lambdin 22 April 1896	No Florence b. 1898; Howard b. 1901; Marion b. 1905	(H) John, merchant (shoes); 1910 manager lumber mill	25		
Elizabeth Lanning	1898	Yes	2 children, both deceased	(H) Azuriah, banker	57		
Frances E. Menaugh	10 September 1896	Yes Married Herbert Menaugh 5 April 1896	No Robert b. 1906; John b.c. 1910; two additional sons died between 1900 and 1910	(H) Herbert, manager lumber mill; later jewelry sales	21		Relations: Nina Wilson (sister-in- law)
Kate Persise	1898	No		(F) Winifeld, manager of milling company	18		
Grace Prow	1898	No Marries Hamlet Hinkle 14 November 1909		(S) Teacher (F) Fred, lawyer	23	N. High St.	Member Weir Memorial Church

National Archives Microfilm Publication M593, Roll 369, Page 211, hereafter referred to as 1870 Census, Town of Salem, Page 211. **Cora De Pew** – 1880 Census, Town of Salem, ED 186, page 27C; 1900 Census, Town of Salem, ED 142, page 15A. **Carrie St. John** – 1900 Census, Town of Salem, ED 142, page 15B; 1910 Census, Town of Salem, ED 164, page 7B. **Edith Attkisson Rudder** – 1900 Census, Town of Salem, ED 142, page 9B; 1910 Census, Town of Salem, ED 164, page 22B; Stevens, *Centennial History*, 681-6; "Attkisson-Rudder Nuptials," *Salem Republican Leader*, 28 October 1898. **Kate Williams Williams** – Works Progress Administration, *Washington Co. IN Index to Marriage Records, 1850-1920*, Book M, page 89; 1900 Census, Town of Salem, ED 142, page 19B.

	DATE ENROLLED	MARRIED	CHILDREN	HUSBAND, FATHER, SELF OCCUPATION	AGE WHEN ENROLLED	ADDRESS	OTHER
Clara Hobbs Ramsey	10 September 1896	Yes Married Isaac Ramsey 17 October 1893	Dwight, 1; Ellen, b.1899	(H) Isaac Ramsey, salemsan	27		
Cora [Maud] Wilson	1898	Yes	No Robert b. 1899	(H) Harry, superintendent of schools	23		Relations: possibly Nina Wilson
Nina Menaugh Wilson	1898	Yes	Frank, 12; Blanche, ?	(H) Theodore, bank cashier at Citizens State Bank (F) Eli , general store 1865- 1871, then deputy clerk of county, director and v.p. of Citizen's State Bank, and owner of <i>Salem Democrat</i>	30		Member of Baptist Church Relations: Possibly Cora Wilson; Frances Menaugh (sister-in- law)
Maud Cutshaw	1899-1900	Yes	1 child died before 1900	(H) Noble, bookkeeper	27		
Ora Alspaugh Masterson	1899-1900	Yes Married James Masterson 11 September 1894		(H) James, attorney	27		
Clara Voyles	1899	No		(F) Samuel , attorney, elected Judge in 1890	21		Relations: Father practiced law with Harvey Morris, husband of Mattie Morris

	DATE ENROLLED	MARRIED	CHILDREN	HUSBAND, FATHER, SELF OCCUPATION	AGE WHEN ENROLLED	ADDRESS	OTHER
Ellen Wilson	1900-1901	No Married Byron Hutchings 26 October 1905	No Jane, b. 1915	(H) Byron Hutchings, doctor/surgeon	28		Relations: Possibly Cora or Nina Wilson

Sources³²¹

³²¹ Ladies' Piano Club Membership List. **Daisy Atkisson** – 1900 Census, Town of Salem, ED 142, page 19B. **Daisy Hoggart** – Works Progress Administration, *Washington County, IN Index to Marriage Records 1850-1920*, Book M, page 471; 1880 Census, Town of Salem, ED 186, page 16; 1900 Census, Town of Salem, ED 142, page 4A. **Minnie Lambdin** – Manuscript Census, Town of New Albany, Ward 7, Floyd County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population 1910, in National Archives Microfilm Publication T624, Roll 349, Enumeration District 81, page 6B; Works Progress Administration, *Washington County, Indiana, Index to Marriage Records, 1850-1920*, Book L, Page 88; 1900 Census, Town of Salem, ED 142, page 8A. **Elizabeth Lanning** – 1900 Census, Town of Salem, ED 142, page 11B. **Frances Menaugh** – 1910 Census, Town of Salem, ED 164, page 19A; Stevens, *Centennial History*, 816-820. **Kate Persise** – 1900 Census, Town of Salem, ED 142, page 4B; 1910 Census, Town of Salem, ED 164, page 16B. **Grace Prow** – "Prow-Hinkle," *Salem Republican Leader*, 19 Nov 1909; 1900 Census, Town of Salem, ED 142, page 17B. **Clara Hobbs Ramsey** – 1900 Census, Town of Salem, ED 142, page 11B. **Cora Wilson** – 1900 Census, Town of Salem, ED 142, page 20B. **Nina Menaugh Wilson** – 1910 Census, Town of Salem, ED 164, page 17B; Stevens, *Centennial History*, 816-820. **Maud Cutshaw** – 1900 Census, Town of Salem, ED 142, page 10A; 1910 Census, Town of Salem, ED 164, page 16B. **Ora Alspaugh Masterson** – 1900 Census, Town of Salem, ED 142, page 5A. **Clara Voyles** – 1900 Census, Town of Salem, ED 142, page 15B; Stevens, *Centennial History*, 842-3. **Ellen Wilson** – Manuscript Census, City of Terre Haute Ward 2, Vigo County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population 1920 in National Archives Microfilm Publication T624, Roll 468, Enumeration District 127, page 3B; Works Progress Administration, *Washington County, Indiana Index to Marriage Records 1850-1920*, Book H, page 385.

Chart G: Zerelda Charter Members' Resignations

	YEAR RESIGNED MEMBERSHIP	REASON
Emma Haymond	Between 1930-1939	
Victoria Beck Moon	1928	Died
Barbary Brown	1891	
Mattie Hendee	1888; 1954-5	First left when she became pregnant, later returned and remained a member until her death
Jennie Ripple	1900	Died
Sarah Chapman	1890	
Mary Binns	1912-1913	Died
Sarah Thayer	1914	Died

Sources ³²²

Chart H: Other Zerelda Members' Resignations

	YEAR RESIGNED MEMBERSHIP	REASON
Catharine Woods	1922-1923	
Mary Beck	Between 1896-1910	Died 12 July 1906
Lucretia Jaques	Between 1930-1939	
Jennie Porter	1891	
Jennie Blackford	1891	
Julia Trish	Between 1896-1910	Died 9 May 1902
Nancy Bitner	1889	
Rose Comstock	1939	
Isabella Troutman	1895	Moved from town
Etta Wilkie	1889	
Fannie Ridgely	1891	
Mamie Conrad	1911-1912	
Mae Baker	1896-1910	
Rose Hetrick	1953-1954	
Mamie Schultz	1890	
Ida Weaver	1890	
Clara Beck Funk	1890	Died
Kate Ale	1892	
Sarah Chipman	1911-1912	
Lucinda Erwin		
Susan Erwin		
Eliza Webber	1940-1941	
Hattie Brubaker	1889	Died

³²² Zerelda Reading Club Membership List; "Mrs. Lewis Ripple," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 30 April 1900.

	YEAR RESIGNED MEMBERSHIP	REASON
Etta Stewart		
Vie Granger	1890	
Kitty Reynolds Lash	1892	She died in Elkhart 5 June 1893
Jennie Weaver	1889	Moved to Washington City
Florence Funk	1925-1926	Moved from town
Trella Wood Brubaker	Between 1896-1910	
Frances Hall	1895	
Jennie Ervin		
Ora [Orilla] Funk	1947-1948	
Regina Bitner [Bowser]	1953	Died
Mattie Wood [Pavey]	1899	Asked to resign because she had not been attending meetings
Mattie Ripple	Between 1896-1910	
Sue Conrad	1916-1917	
Erba Webber	1896	Moved to Michigan
Mabel Haymond Stephenson	1914-1915	
Carrie Jaques	After 1956-1957	
Salome Funk	1892	Withdrew
Emily Baker		
Mary Cosgrove		
Kate Brubaker		
Mattie Comstock		
Mary Ale		
Jessie Thayer		

Sources³²³

³²³ Zerelda Reading Club Minutes 18 September 1899, Zerelda Reading Club Records; Zerelda Reading Club Membership List; "Death of Mrs. Will Funk," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 14 July 1890; "Death of Mrs. John H. Brubaker," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 2 May 1889; "The Funeral of Mrs. John H. Brubaker," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 6 May 1889; "Mother Trish Dead," *Warsaw Daily Times*, 10 May 1907; Letter, George and Francis Bowser to Zerelda Reading Club, 13 April 1959, Zerelda Reading Club Records.

Chart I: Florentine Charter Members' Resignations

	YEAR RESIGNED MEMBERSHIP	REASON
Helen Caldwell	Still active 1930	
Hattie Cochran	1904-1905	Married
Iva Flanigan	1901-1902	
Katharine Hogshire	1901-1902	Married
Alice Hogshire Coons	1904-1905; 1909-1910	
Mary Harrison Shireman	1904-1905	Moved to Martinsville
Berthe Perkins	1904-1905	Unknown, possibly related to father's death
Esther Perkins	1904-1905; 1919	Unknown, possibly related to father's death; rejoined and stayed until she married.
Gertrude Parkhurst	1912	Died
Byrnia Smith	1905-1906	
Daisy Tipton	1901-1902	Moved to Hamilton County
Ruth Perkins	1901-1902	Possibly left to attend college
Bertha Martin	1901-1902	Married

Sources³²⁴

Chart J: Other Florentine Member Resignations

	YEAR RESIGNED MEMBERSHIP	REASON
Lucy Nichols	1901-1902	
Leah Cory	1902	Moved to Chicago
Gertrude Neal	1905-1906	
Lydia Bell	Sometime after 1919	
Gertrude Hardy Kinert	1905	Moved to Kanakaee
Hannah Bell	Sometime after 1907	
Mae Gabriel	Sometime between 1907 and 1919	Married 1909
Edith Sims	1904-1905	
Grace Neal	c. 1914	
Jennie Pugh	1904-1905	
Anna Ross	Sometime between 1908-1919	

Sources³²⁵

³²⁴ Florentine Club Membership List; "Mrs. Gertrude Parkhurst," *Lebanon Pioneer*, 10 October 1912; "Nineteen Finish the Course of Study in the Lebanon High School," *Lebanon Pioneer*, 11 May 1899; *Boone County, Indiana, Index to Marriage Records 1844-1920*; Letter, Mary Harrison Shireman to Florentine Club, no date, Florentine Club Records; Works Progress Administration, *Indiana Deaths, 1882-1920*; Manuscript Census, Adams Township, Hamilton County, Indiana, 1910, in National Archives Microfilm Publication T624, Roll 353, Enumeration District 93, page 1A.

³²⁵ Florentine Club Membership List; "Voriss-Cory Marriage," *Lebanon Patriot*, 17 April 1902; "Kinnert-Hardy Nuptials," *Lebanon Patriot*, 28 December 2005; Works Progress Administration, Boone County, Indiana, *Index to Marriage Records, 1844-1920*, Book C, page 155.

Chart K: Resignations of Charter Members of the Ladies' Piano Club

	YEAR RESIGNED MEMBERSHIP	REASON
Mattie [Martha] Tucker Morris	Past 1910	
Minnie Martin	1902-3	
Nell Bare	Past 1910	
Cora De Pew	Before 1902	
Carrie St. John	Past 1910	
Edith Attkisson Rudder	Past 1910	
Kate Williams Williams	1899-1900	

Sources³²⁶

Chart L: Resignations of Other Members of the Ladies' Piano Club

	YEAR RESIGNED MEMBERSHIP	REASON
Daisy Attkisson	Before 1902	
Daisy Hoggatt	1906-7	Married 1906
Minnie F Lambdin	Before 1902	Daughter born 1898, son born 1901
Elizabeth Lanning	Before 1902	
Frances E. Menaugh	Past 1909	
Kate Persise	1907-8	
Grace Prow	1905	Moved to Bedford to become Superintendent of School
Clara Ramsey	Before 1902	Daughter born 1899
Cora Wilson	Before 1902	Son born 1899
Nina Wilson	Past 1909	
Maud Cutshaw	Before 1902	
Ora Masterson	Past 1909	
Clara Voyles	Past 1909	
Ellen Wilson	1904-5	Married 1905

Sources³²⁷

³²⁶ Ladies' Piano Club Membership List.

³²⁷ Ibid.; Works Progress Administration, *Washington County, IN Index to Marriage Records 1850-1920*, Book M, page 471, Book H, page 385; Manuscript Census, Town of New Albany, Ward 7, Floyd County, Indiana, U.S. Census of Population 1910, in National Archives Microfilm Publication Roll T624 349, Enumeration District 81, page 6B; 1900 Census, Town of Salem, ED 142, Page 8A, 11B, 20B; "Prow-Hinkle," *Salem Republican Leader*, 19 November 1909.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources – Unpublished

Articles of Incorporation of the Zerelda Reading Club, filed 19 February 1889, Indiana State Archives, Indianapolis.

Indianapolis Propylaeum Collection, Indiana Historical Society, Indianapolis.

Clio Club Records, Old Jail Museum, Kosciusko County Historical Society, Warsaw, Indiana.

Florentine Club Records, Cragun House, Boone County Historical Society, Lebanon, Indiana.

Ladies' Piano Club Records, Stevens Museum, Washington County Historical Society, Salem, Indiana.

"Our Heritage in Oak Hill Cemetery, Lebanon, Indiana: One Hundred Years of Community Service, 1872-1972," program dated 25 June 1972, Indiana State Library, Genealogy Division, Indianapolis.

Zerelda Reading Club Records, Old Jail Museum, Kosciusko County Historical Society, Warsaw, Indiana.

Primary Sources – Published

Burns, Harrison. *Annotated Statutes of the State of Indiana Showing the General Statutes in Force January 1, 1894*, vol. 3. Indianapolis: Bowen-Merrill Co., 1894.

Elson, Arthur. *Music Club Programs From All Nations*. Boston: Oliver Ditson Co., 1907.

Federal Manuscript Census, Adams Township, Hamilton County, Indiana, 1910.

Federal Manuscript Census, City of Terre Haute, Vigo County, Indiana, 1920.

Federal Manuscript Census, Town of Lebanon, Boone County, Indiana, 1870, 1880, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930.

Federal Manuscript Census, Town of New Albany, Floyd County, Indiana, 1910.

Federal Manuscript Census, Town of Salem, Washington County, Indiana, 1870, 1880, 1900, 1910.

Federal Manuscript Census, Town of Warsaw, Kosciusko County, Indiana, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1900.

H.D. Steele's Warsaw City Directory, 1888-1889.

Howe, Julia Ward. "How Can Women Best Associate?" in *Papers and Letters Presented at the First Woman's Congress of the Association for the Advancement of Women, October, 1873*. New York: Mrs. William Ballard, 1874: 5-10.

Indianapolis News.

Indianian Republican.

Laws of Indiana (1887).

Laws of Indiana (1897).

Lebanon Directory, 1900-1901. Logansport, Indiana: Longwell & Cummings, 1901.

Lebanon Patriot.

Lebanon Pioneer.

Northern Indianian.

North Manchester News Journal.

Ruskin, John. *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*. London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1849.

Salem Republican Leader.

Stoddard, John L. *John L. Stoddard's Lectures*. New York: Middlebrook & Co., 1897.

Surbridge, Agnes. *The Confessions of a Clubwoman*. New York: Doubleday, Page & Co., 1904.

Warsaw Daily Times.

Warsaw Times Union.

Warsaw Union.

Winslow, Helen M. *The President of the Quex: A Woman's Club Story*. Boston: Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, 1906.

Secondary Sources

Apple, Rima D., ed. *Women, Health and Medicine in America: A Historical Handbook*. New York: Garland Publishing Co., 1990.

Binkley, Cameron. "'No Better Heritage than Living Trees': Women's Clubs and Early Conservation in Humboldt County." *Western Historical Quarterly* 33 (Summer 2002): 179-204.

Blair, Karen J. *The Clubwoman as Feminist: True Womanhood Redefined, 1868-1914*. New York: Holmes & Meier Publishers, Inc., 1980.

Blair, Karen J. *The Torchbearers: Women and their Amateur Arts Associations in America, 1890-1930*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994.

Bobinski, George S. *Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development*. Chicago: American Library Association, 1969.

Boomhower, Ray E. *The Country Contributor: The Life and Times of Juliet V. Strauss*. Carmel: Guild Press of Indiana, 1998.

Boone County Historical Society. *History of Boone County, Indiana*. Lebanon, Indiana: Boone County Historical Society, 1984.

Bormet, Michelle J. *A History of the City of Warsaw, Indiana: Preserving the Past for the Future*. Bourbon, Indiana: Harmony Marketing Group, 2001.

Boruff, Blanche Foster, ed. *Women of Indiana*. Indianapolis: Matthew Farson, 1941.

Bowers, Anne. "White-Gloved Feminists: An Analysis of Northwest Ohio Women's Clubs." *Hayes Historical Journal* 4 (Fall 1984): 38-47.

Campbell, Bruce A. "Social Federalism: The Constitutional Position of Nonprofit Corporations in Nineteenth-Century America." *Law & History Review* 8 (Autumn 1990): 149-188.

Cash, Floris Loretta Barnett. *African American Women and Social Action: The Clubwomen and Volunteerism From Jim Crow to the New Deal, 1896-1936*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 2001.

Cott, Nancy, ed. *No Small Courage: A History of Women in the United States*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

- Cott, Nancy, ed. *Women Together: Organizational Life*. Munich: K.G. Saur, 1994.
- Courtney, Grace Gates. *History Indiana Federation of Clubs*. Fort Wayne, Indiana: Fort Wayne Printing Company, 1939.
- Crist, Hon. L.M.. *History of Boone County, Indiana: with Biographical Sketches of Representative Citizens and Genealogical Records of Old Families*. Indianapolis: A.W. Bowen, 1914.
- Croly, Jane Cunningham. *The History of the Woman's Club Movement in America*. New York: H.G. Allen & Co., 1898.
- Dunn, Caroline. *Indianapolis Propylaeum: A History of the Indianapolis Propylaeum*. Indianapolis: privately printed, 1938.
- Evans, Sarah M. *Born for Liberty: A History of Women in America*. New York: Free Press, 1989.
- Ferguson, Earline Rae. "The Woman's Improvement Club of Indianapolis: Black Women Pioneers in Tuberculosis Work, 1903-1938." *Indiana Magazine of History* 84 (September 1988): 237-261.
- Ferguson, Earline Rae. "A Community Affair: African American Women's Club Work in Indianapolis, 1879-1917." Ph.D. dissertation, Indiana University, 1997.
- Flanagan, Maureen. "The City Profitable, the City Livable: Environmental Policy, Gender, and Power in Chicago in the 1910s." *Journal of Urban History* 22 (January 1996): 163-190.
- Gabin, Nancy. "Fallow Yet Fertile: The Field of Indiana Women's History." *Indiana Magazine of History* 96 (September 2000): 213-250.
- Gatti, Stacey Horstmann. "Thinking Globally, Acting Locally: The Women of the Setauket Library Club, 1896-1924." *Long Island Historical Journal* 17 no. 1 (2005): 16-40.
- Gere, Anne Ruggles. *Intimate Practices: Literacy and Cultural Work in U.S. Women's Clubs, 1880-1920*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997.
- Hendricks, Wanda A. *Gender, Race, and Politics in the Midwest: Black Club Women in Illinois*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998.
- History of Washington County, Indiana*. Paoli, Indiana: Stout's Print Shop, 1965.
- Johnson, Joan Marie. *Southern Ladies, New Women: Race, Region, and Clubwomen in South Carolina, 1890-1930*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2004.

- Kelley, Erin K. "'A Worthwhile Existence': The Conservatism and Consciousness of Indianapolis Clubwomen, 1875-1920." M.A. Thesis, Indiana University, 2003.
- Knupfer, Anne Meis. *Toward a Tenderer Humanity and a Nobler Womanhood: African American Women's Clubs in Turn-of-the-Century Chicago*. New York: New York University Press, 1996.
- Lee, Mabel. *A History of Physical Education and Sports in the U.S.A.* New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1983.
- Martin, Robert Sidney, ed. *Carnegie Denied: Communities Rejecting Carnegie Library Construction Grants, 1898-1925*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1993.
- Martin, Theodora Penny. *The Sound of Our Own Voices: Women's Study Clubs, 1860-1910*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1987.
- McKay, Martha Nicholson. *Literary Clubs of Indiana*. Indianapolis: Bowen-Merrill Company, 1894.
- McPherson, Alan. *Temples of Knowledge: Andrew Carnegie's Gift to Indiana*. Kewanna, Indiana: Hoosier's Nest Press, 2003.
- Moonen, Alida Joyce. "The Missing Half: The Experience of Women in the Indianapolis Athenaeum Turneverein Women's Auxiliary." Ph.D. dissertation, Ohio State University, 1993.
- Murolo, Priscilla. *The Common Ground of Womanhood: Class, Gender, and Working Girls' Clubs, 1884-1928*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997.
- Murphy, Lucy Elderveld and Wendy Hamand Venet, eds. *Midwestern Women: Work, Community, and Leadership at the Crossroads*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997.
- Phillips, Clifton J. *Indiana in Transition: The Emergence of an Industrial Commonwealth, 1880-1920*. Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society and Indiana Historical Bureau, 1968.
- Platt, Harold L. "Jane Addams and the Ward Boss Revisited: Class, Politics, and Public Health in Chicago, 1890-1930." *Environmental History* 5 (April 2000): 194-222.
- Progressive Men and Women of Kosciusko County, Indiana*. Logansport: B.F. Bowen, 1902.

- Rimby, Susan. "'Better Housekeeping Out of Doors': Mira Lloyd Dock, the State Federation of Pennsylvania Women, and Progressive Era Conservation." *Journal of Women's History* 17 (Fall 2005): 9-34.
- Ross, Frances Mitchell. "The New Woman as Club Woman and Social Activist in Turn of the Century Arkansas." *Arkansas History Quarterly* 50, no. 4 (Winter 1991): 317-351.
- Salstrom, Paul. *From Pioneering to Persevering: Family Farming in Indiana to 1880*. West Lafayette, Indiana: Purdue University Press, 2007.
- Scott, Anne Firor. *Natural Allies: Women's Associations in American History*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991.
- Seigel, Peggy. "Winning the Vote in Fort Wayne, Indiana: The Long, Cautious Journey in a German American City." *Indiana Magazine of History* 102 (September 2006): 220-257.
- Sherman, Mrs. John Dickinson. "The Women's Clubs in the Middle Western States." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 28 (September 1906): 29-49.
- Slevin, Ruth. *Kosciusko County, Indiana Marriages, 1846-1891*. Privately printed, 1972.
- Smith, Bonnie. *Changing Lives: Women in European History Since 1700*. Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath & Co., 1989.
- Spain, Daphne. *How Women Saved the City*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001.
- State of Indiana. "Stats Indiana," <http://www.stats.indiana.edu> (accessed 12 February 2007).
- Stevens, Warder W. *Centennial History of Washington County, Indiana: Its People, Industries and Institutions with Biographical Sketches of Representative Citizens and Genealogical Records of Many of the Old Families*. Indianapolis: B.F. Bowen, 1916. Reprint: Utica, Kentucky: McDowell Publications, 1987.
- Steinson, Barbara J. "Rural Life in Indiana, 1800-1950." *Indiana Magazine of History* 90 (September 1994): 203-250.
- Underwood, June O. "Civilizing Kansas: Women's Organizations, 1880-1920." *Kansas History* 7 (Winter 1984-5): 291-306.

- United States Census Bureau. Historical Census Figures,
http://www2.census.gov/prod2/decennialdocuments/1890a_vi_08.pdf (accessed
 12 February 2007).
- Van Slyck, Abigail A. *Free to All: Carnegie Libraries and American Culture, 1890-1920*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.
- Walsh, Justin E. *The Centennial History of the Indiana General Assembly, 1816-1978*. Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Bureau, 1987.
- Wirka, Susan Marie. "The City Social Movement: Progressive Women Reformers and Early Social Planning." In *Planning the Twentieth Century American City*, ed. Mary Corbin Sies and Christopher Silver, 55-75. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996.
- Woloch, Nancy. *Women and the American Experience*, 2nd ed. New York: McGraw Hill, 1994.
- Wood, Mary I. *The History of the General Federation of Women's Clubs for the First Twenty-Two Years of its Organization*. New York: General Federation of Women's Clubs, 1912.
- Works Progress Administration, *Boone County, Indiana, Index to Marriage Records 1844-1920*.
- Works Progress Administration, *Indiana Deaths, 1882-1920*.
- Works Progress Administration, *Index to Birth Records, Indiana, 1882-1920*.
- Works Progress Administration, *Marion County, Indiana, Index to Marriage Records 1901-1905*.
- Works Progress Administration, *Morgan County, Indiana, Index to Marriage Record 1850-1920*.
- Works Progress Administration, *Washington County, Indiana, Index to Marriage Records 1850-1920*.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Mary Elizabeth Owen

Education:

- Master of Arts in Public History, Indiana University, earned at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, April 2008
Thesis: "Three Indiana Women's Clubs: A Study of their Patterns of Association, Study Practices, and Civic Improvement Work, 1886-1910"
- Bachelor of Arts in History, Indiana University, earned at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, May 2005

Professional Experience:

- Graduate internship for the Indiana Women's History Association, Summer 2007
Created a bibliography of Indiana women's history resources and researched historical women
- Graduate internships for the Broad Ripple Home Tour, Summer 2006 and Summer 2007
Researched ten historic houses and developed text for the tour booklets
- Graduate internship for the Morris-Butler House, Spring 2006-December 2006
Assisted with public programs, created a reinterpretation plan to showcase a servant's bedroom

Research Experience:

- Completed oral history interviews of women in administration at IUPUI for a project titled, "Women at IUPUI: An Oral History Project Focusing on the Understanding of Women's Achievements and Contributions to the Development of IUPUI," August 2007
- Completed a research paper on the significance of the Indianapolis Propylaeum in Indiana women's history, December 2006, submitted to the Indiana Historical Bureau
- Submitted a proposal to the Indiana Women's History Association for the implementation of their Indiana Women's History Trail, December 2006

Publications and Conference Presentations:

- Women Building IUPUI: A Walking Trail, www.iupui.edu/~history/trail
- Panel Presentation. Life Stories in Indiana Medicine. Women in Medicine at Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis: A Walking Trail. Indiana Association of Historians Annual Meeting, February 2008

Professional Memberships:

- Indiana Historical Society
- Indiana Association of Historians